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ABOUT THE COVER

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The Carolina Quarterly

Announces its Ninth Annual

\$100.00 Short Story Award and \$50.00 Poetry Award

These cash prizes to be presented to the author of the short story and the author of the poem judged the best work published during the year, i.e., in any of the three issues of each volume. Recipients of the awards will be announced in the Summer issue. *Closing date of the final issue of the current volume is April 1.*

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1959

PUBLICATION

Olivant

1821 N.W. 185th St.
Opa-Locka
Miami, Florida



Olivant No. 4

LI SAO of Ch'u Yuan, a credible
prose trs. w/ Intro. & Notes by
Jerah Johnson (March) \$4.00
(Japan printed)

Olivant No. 5

SHAPE OF THE TANGO, a play and
poetic-prose collection by Vincent
Benedetto (June) \$3.00

Olivant No. 6

THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM. First
book of poems by John Silkin of
England. A re-release first published
1954 in London (Aug) \$3.00

Ambrose

One thing, at least she did take me aside and ask me politely and quietly to leave. She didn't scream out in front of everybody and order me out, which did happen at one high-class party I was at and which was very embarrassing. Except the hostess at that one was much more high-strung than this one. I don't seem to get along with high-strung people too well. I mean I'll be with one and after about fifteen minutes they'll be screaming and hollering at me.

Anyway, I walked out of the place feeling pretty much like a social failure, but I didn't have too much time to think about it because just then I saw a group of guys standing out in the front yard. They seemed to be up to something because I heard the words 'drunk' and 'swimming' so I walked over to see what it was all about. I mean if there was going to be anything happening I wanted to be right in it.

Eddie Layton was there and when he saw me coming he said real loud, "Hello, Bro!" I said "Hello" back and then the rest of them turned around and started patting me on the back.

Eddie said, "How would you like a drink, Bro?"

I said that I would and he said "here" and handed me one. I told him he would make a good bartender because he was so quick at mixing drinks.

"Oh, it's mine," he said. "But you can have it. I've already had too much."

I guess Eddie still wanted to get me drunk. He'd been trying to do that all evening so that I would embarrass myself and get kicked out of the party. I should have told him then that I was already kicked out and that he could save himself a lot of bother, but I didn't. I decided I could get some more free drinks.

I took a sip of what he handed me. It was really strange tasting so I asked him what kind it was. The question kind of stumped him. He looked at the others and they seemed just as puzzled. A couple shrugged their shoulders. Finally one of them said, "It's kind of a mongrel drink."

"What's that?" I asked.

"Well, it's kind of a drink that's made up of a whole lot of different liquors."

ROBERT ROBINSON is a senior honors candidate in creative writing at the University of North Carolina. The selection which appears in this issue of *The Quarterly* is a chapter from his novel, *The Clown*, and his first published work.

"Oh," I said, which I thought was a good answer and showed a lot of imagination so I drank it and they all patted me on the shoulder. Somebody took the glass out of my hand and passed it around to all of them. Each of them poured something into it from their flask or bottle then passed it back to me and I drank it.

Well this went on and it wasn't long before I was out in orbit, which really made them happy, so I said before they got around to it, "What I need is a good swim!" They agreed and cheered and led me down to the ocean which was right in front of the house.

The next thing I knew I was sloshing around in the surf. Actually the water felt right good, but it didn't sober me up so I decided to stay in for a while and dove into a wave and swam out.

I guess I went out pretty far, because soon they couldn't see me anymore and I couldn't see them. It wasn't too clear out.

Someone said, "Bro, where are you? Don't swim out too far." Actually there wasn't anything to worry about. I could always tell where land was by the lights on the boardwalk.

Then soon a lot of them started calling, but I didn't answer. I thought that I would make them worry for a while.

One of them got right mad and hollered out that if I was joking around he'd beat the living daylight out of me.

I should have hollered back, "Any time, buddy," but I didn't. I just started floating on my back and enjoying myself. It was really nice out there.

Soon I noticed that the voices were moving off to the side which must have meant that the current was carrying me pretty fast, so I swam out farther. There were a lot of jetties that went out about a hundred yards and I didn't much like coping with one of those right then. I mean they were made of metal and real rusty and were covered with barnacles. If you ever scraped up against one, you might as well get the tetanus shots out.

Soon the voices got right dim, but they sounded much more frantic. Also I saw a flashlight beam waving around. I should have told them right then that I was all right, but I was too busy goofing off out there. I had started going in and out of the water like I was a porpoise, which is one fish that really fascinates me. I used to sit on the beach all day and watch them go past. Once I even wrote a paper at one of the prep schools called "The Purpose of a Porpoise." My whole idea was that they didn't have a purpose, which I think is their main selling point and right then if Neptune had come out and asked me if I wanted to become a porpoise I would have said, "sure thing." Of course I was drunk then but I think I would have given the same answer sober.

But Neptune never came out and after a while, I got cold so I swam to shore. I was thinking about walking back and telling them I hadn't drowned. I imagine they were probably worried. I know

I would be if I thought I had drowned somebody, but I had drifted pretty far and it was a long walk back.

Anyway, I was right off the main part of the boardwalk so I decided to go up and get a cup of coffee and phone them from some restaurant, but just when I was on the boardwalk and about ready to go into the Sea Shell, I heard somebody say, "Now, David, look at all these people. Do you think they are really happy?" Which I thought was a pretty interesting question, because a lot of people spend all this money to come down to the resort and it's hard to tell whether they are really happy about it.

I looked around to see what kind of answer David was going to give, but he didn't get a chance to give any, because the other guy just kept on talking, though he sounded right interesting, so I went over to listen to him.

"Just look at the expressions on their faces, at the blank idiotic grins, Mongolian almost." He said, "Now could that be real happiness?" Then he saw me staring at him and quit talking and looked me up and down.

"Who're you, Robinson Crusoe?" Which I thought was right funny and a good comparison, because I was all wet and still had on my homemade bermuda shorts, but I don't think he had any right to criticize anybody about what they wore because he and the two with him looked like they were dressed to go to a costume ball. They all wore black turtle neck sweaters and had on sandals and paint covered dungarees.

One of them was a girl, but you could hardly tell it if you looked at them from the back because they all had the same length of hair.

The girl was real cute and under normal circumstances I would have tried to make a play for her, but David looked like some movie star and I wouldn't have had a chance. The other guy who was doing all the talking was real short. Also he had one of the skinniest necks I'd ever seen. I don't see how he managed to keep his head on it.

Anyway they made a few more cracks, like asking me how my ship got wrecked and if I was the only survivor. I didn't answer them, I just kept quiet and stared at them with these very penetrating eyes. Though they must not have been too penetrating tonight, because it didn't stop their wisecracking, so what I did I walked over to the other side of the boardwalk and looked at them real sad like. I have all kinds of tactics and the last must have worked because the girl said, "I think we've hurt his feelings," but the others just laughed.

Well soon they forgot all about me and started walking away, so I decided to follow them. They looked like a pretty good group

to mess around with. I mean they didn't look like they would panic very easily.

I followed them about three blocks before they even realized I was in back of them. We had left the crowd and all, and for some reason the girl happened to turn around and spot me. Actually I was kind of sorry that happened because I was trying to see how far I could follow them before they noticed it.

She nudged the other two and they looked around and then they stopped, so I stopped too. They just looked at me for a while, but didn't say anything. Then they started walking again and I followed them.

I could tell what they were up to. They had a trick up their sleeve, because they started walking real fast and I practically had to run to keep up with them. Then all of a sudden they stopped so I stopped too.

David, who seemed to be the bravest, came over and asked, "Are you following us?"

I didn't say anything. The other two came over and looked at me.

"Maybe, he plans to kill us." The other guy said real calmly. He poked his finger at me. "Tell us. Is that what you plan to do, track us to some dark place and prance on us like a wild beast?"

I shook my head and looked down at him.

"No, Jim, don't be facetious, he isn't a murderer." The girl said. "Just look at his face." They all looked up at my face. I felt like a statue in the park or something.

"That's what fools you," Jim said. "Beneath that simple boyish countenance is a psychopathic killer."

"Well, he brings out my mother instinct," the girl said.

"And he brings out mine, too," David said. "Maybe you don't have any mother instinct in you, Jim."

"Thank God!" Jim said, but he still kept looking at me. He studied me for a while and then said, "But now that you mention it, he does look kind of cuddlesome. Like an overgrown pup-dog. That's it!" he said. He was pretty excited about it. "That's what he is, a dog. That's why he doesn't speak. He's a dog and dogs can't talk."

It got kind of quiet and I was hoping somebody would disagree with him about me looking like a dog, but then the girl looked at me for a while and said, "What kind of dog would you say he was?"

"Probably a cross between a Chesapeake Bay Retriever and a Saint Bernard," Jim said and looked at me. "Am I right?"

I nodded.

"See, I was right," he said, "but now you had better go back to your owner before the dog catcher finds you without your license."

They started walking and I followed them. Actually it's things like this that make life worth living. Well, they went about twenty feet and then stopped again. Jim turned around and pointed in the opposite direction and said, "Go home, boy! Now go home!" I thought for a while he was going to throw a stick at me.

"Why won't he talk, Jim?" the girl asked the short guy. She looked kind of worried, like she thought that something was wrong with me, like I was disabled or something and couldn't talk. I didn't want that to happen because then they would feel sorry for me and quit kidding around, so right after Jim answered the girl with, "I explained to you why he couldn't talk. He's a dog. He even admitted it himself," I said "Arf, Arf," which kind of surprised them at first, but they got a big laugh out of it. They made a few more comments at my expense, but we were all enjoying it so I didn't mind too much.

"We can't stay here and talk to Rover all night," Jim said and they agreed, so they headed on again.

This time I followed them all the way to their cottage and when they went up the steps I really gave them a sad expression. I was kind of sad too, because I didn't have a place to sleep that night.

"I think he wants to come inside," the girl said.

"Do you suppose he's house broken?" Jim asked.

"Oh, let him in," the girl said. David held the door open and I went inside.

I saw that they had a telephone and a directory, so I went over and looked up the number where I had been to the party.

I dialed the number and Jim said that I could use the phone if I wanted to. He was pretty sarcastic.

Some lady answered the phone and I asked, "Is Eddie Layton there?"

She said that he was down on the beach, so I told her that this was one of Bro's relations speaking. She said, "Oh," and then said that she would go get him. They must have really thought I'd drowned by the way she said "Oh."

She set the phone down and I could hear a lot of people talking. I couldn't hear what they were saying, but the tone sounded very serious. I must have really killed that party.

Finally somebody said real meek like, "Hello," and I knew it was Eddie.

"This is Mr. Saunders, Bro's cousin." I talked in a real low voice.

"Yes, I know. Mrs. Harrington told me you wanted to speak to me."

"I heard that Bro was in an accident. Have you found his body yet?" I covered the mouth piece and turned to my new friends, "I'm Bro," I said and they nodded their heads.

"No," Eddie said, "but there's a good chance that he's all right. He's a good swimmer and probably the tide carried him down."

"We don't want to build up our hopes too much," I said in a real hopeless tone.

"No," Eddie said. It was quiet for a while. Then he went on, "We called the Coast Guard and they've sent out a boat."

"The Coast Guard?" I said. "Did you tell them who you were looking for?"

"Yes," he said, "they seemed reluctant to go at first. I guess they had had a couple of false alarms before. That's why we think that he is all right."

"You didn't call his parents then?"

"No," he said, "we decided to wait a while—until we were sure." I was glad of that, because I didn't see much sense in making them worry.

There was a quiet spell on the phone. Then I said, "How'd it happen, Eddie?"

"It was an accident," he said and then went on to explain how it happened. I thought I could lie, but after hearing the tale he made up, I should turn in my equipment. According to him, they didn't have anything to do with it. I just seemed to go berserk and ran right into the ocean. They tried to stop me, but I went in anyway.

"I heard that you got him intoxicated," I said, "before he went berserk."

"We were just kidding around," he said, "we didn't think he would go into the water."

"Somebody told me that it was your plan to get him drunk and then persuade him to go in swimming."

You'd think Eddie would catch on by now, but he didn't. He asked, "Who told you that?"

"Never mind," I said. "It's useless to try and stop the truth, Eddie. But this is all beside the point. You're the one who has to live with yourself, with your lies." I let that soak in for a while.

"I think that's unfair to say that, Mr. Saunders. I feel bad enough about all this."

He didn't sound like he felt too bad, so I said, "You should feel bad, Eddie. And there's going to be a lot of other people feeling bad about it too. He was liked and loved by a lot of people. The little people, especially." That sounded pretty good so I said it again. "The little people loved him, Eddie. And thanks to your, how'd you put it? 'kidding around,' he's dead. Sure, maybe he wasn't sophisticated and maybe he didn't know how to act at parties." By then I was really feeling sorry for myself and was getting carried away. I quit talking in a low voice too. "But a lot

of people looked past that, Eddie. They saw something more important. Something that . . ."

"Dammit, that's you, Bro," Eddie said. "I know it's you. You aren't going to fool me again."

"It seems like to me I already had you fooled, Eddie."

You'd think he'd be happy I was alive instead of getting mad, but I guess by then he had made himself believe he had nothing to do with it.

"I'm getting sick of this, Bro. This makes about the third time you've made a fool out of me, tonight." Which it was, but he kept setting himself up so much it was hard to resist.

"I'll get you for this, Bro." He said. Eddie must have been one of these people with a lot of pride and I must have hit it pretty hard. He said it again that he was going to get me, so I told him that I would put his name on my list and watch out for him. At the present I had much madder enemies than him to look out for. After that we didn't seem to have too much to say to each other, so I hung up.

I was going to explain everything to my new friends because they seemed pretty puzzled about it all. But what I did, I sat down on the leather couch. And when I sat down on the couch I rested my head back and went out like a light.

I must have really slept because when I woke up I could hear them eating next to me and it was right bright out.

I had my back turned to them but I didn't feel much like turning over or even moving a bit. I was pretty much under the weather. Somebody had taken off my shoes and had put a blanket over me so I was just content to lie there and listen. I didn't even let them know I was awake.

I could tell that they were right smart by the size of the words they used, and they used them all the time. They talked about pictures and books, but after a while I got kind of tired of listening and started getting restless. I began trying to think of something to do.

Finally I hit on an idea which I think was right good. First I started moving around and breathing real hard like I was having a nightmare. Then I started mumbling for a while. Well, they got quiet. I could tell they were listening, so then I said out loud, "No! No! Crash. Crash! We can't. Bail out! Bail out! No. No." Then I tossed and turned some more and finally settled down like I was peacefully asleep.

Well it was quiet for a while, then the girl said, "He looks too young to have been in the war."

I was afraid they might have noticed that, but the fact that she wasn't sure showed that I had her partly fooled. I was kind of

hoping that somebody might suggest that it didn't have to be a military plane I was bailing out of, but nobody did.

Then Jim asked, "Do you think we ought to wake him up?" So I had him fooled completely. I could tell them by their voices now which I guess wasn't any great feat, because David had a low voice and Jim a high one, but David said, "No, let him sleep. He might have something more to say." I don't think I had him fooled at all, because the way he talked sounded like he was talking to me instead of them, like he was asking me to act some more.

But I had two out of three of them fooled, and that was enough to keep me happy.

I just laid there for a while. I didn't want to push my act too much.

Well, they started talking again about books and all. It wasn't long before I got restless again, so I started moving around some more and mumbling to myself.

They quit talking about books and then Jim said, "I guess he's going to bail out again." Which I thought was right funny, but I was too carried away with my anguish to laugh. I kept on mumbling, then said, "No! No! It's going to sink. Jump over. Torpedo. Sink." Which I guess was too much for anybody to believe and the only reason I said it was to squelch Jim, but anyway, David said, "All right, Joker, get up."

I should have played up the parachuting angle a little more, but I rolled over and gave them a nice smile so as to make a friendly first impression.

I said, "Good morning," and they said "Good morning" back. We hit it off pretty good.

They offered me some breakfast, but I explained all about the party and the ocean and how much of a hangover I had, so they gave me some tomato juice and coffee.

I asked them where they were from, because I hadn't ever seen them around before. It turned out they were from some university where David taught. Usually I shy away from teachers right away. Most of the worst experiences I ever had in my life were due one way or another to teachers. But David seemed like a pretty good guy so I was willing to overlook it.

While I was drinking my coffee, David started asking me questions. I don't know what brought it on, but he started asking me questions about everything. I don't think he skipped a thing. I told him about all the schools I'd gone to and how I got kicked out. I told him about my home town, what I thought of my parents, the church, and my friends.

By the time he got through, he must have known everything that ever happened in my life, and then some, because I made up

a few things. I didn't want him to think I led a boring life. But he seemed so interested anyway I didn't have to elaborate too much.

Except when he got around to sex, then I really elaborated. At first I was kind of shy because he asked the questions right in front of the girl, but if she wasn't going to blush, I sure wasn't, so I answered him right out. Most of it was just stories that I had heard from other guys and I just switched them over like they had happened to me. Some of them were pretty raunchy, but I told him anyway, and I told him a lot of them.

Finally he said, "That's all right, Bro, I think we've covered that subject enough."

"I was just getting started," I said.

"Your home town must be another Peyton Place," Jim said. "I don't see why they don't form a Y.M.C.A. or a boys' club so that you can find something else to do."

Well, that seemed to be the end of the interview, because David got up and went to the refrigerator and Jim asked, "Are you finding anything?"

I thought he was talking about the refrigerator, but then David said, "Yes, quite a bit. He's very open which was hard to get used to at first." Then I knew it must be me he was talking about. "I went at him too fast and when he opened himself up, I went right through."

"Did you come out as dirty as you usually do?" the girl asked.

I didn't know whether these people were kidding or not, but if they were and I went along with them, I was really having my leg pulled, so I decided the best thing to do was kind of smile and laugh at the things they said.

"No, I came out perfectly clean," David said. "He's one of the healthiest people as far as anxieties are concerned that I've ever met."

"I don't feel too healthy," I said, "and if you had as many Mongrels as I had you wouldn't feel too healthy either."

But they didn't seem too interested, they were too busy talking to each other.

I asked David if he was one of these psychiatrists, but he said he wasn't. Then Jim said, real sarcastically, "David always likes to rummage around in people's attics."

"He likes to play God. Isn't that right, David?"

I thought that Jim was joking, but when I laughed, he looked at me kind of strange and said, "Evidently, it doesn't take too much to amuse you does it?"

"He doesn't understand the situation, Jim," David said. "We probably appear very ridiculous to him." Which was right. "And I think we do owe it to him to explain something about ourselves. It might prove to be an enlightenment for him."

"Isn't David so nice sometimes?" the girl said. This was the most sarcastic group I'd ever seen.

"We're like the characters in *No Exit*, Bro," Jim said to me.

"What's that?" I asked.

"It's a play," Jim said. "You know what exits are, don't you? Like they have in movie theatres?"

"Sure," I said.

"Well, we don't have any. We can't leave."

I looked around me at the room and I don't see how he ever said that with a straight face.

"Now what are you grinning about, Bro?" Jim asked.

I was really in an embarrassing position, because I didn't know whether they were joking or not, and so I started laughing, which I always do in cases like that. Jim had to be joking with me, it didn't make a bit of sense otherwise.

But finally David came to my rescue. He said, "I'll explain the situation. Bro seems to have trouble with the abstract."

Then David sat down across from me and started to explain the situation. He said that Jim and Lena, I finally found out the name of the girl, but he said that Jim and Lena were his pygmalsions, which lost me right there. So I asked him what they were, and he told me the story of Pygmalion, which I thought was pretty interesting. Then he went on to explain how Jim and Lena came to him for help and criticism. They were both artists, and he used to help them with whatever they were doing. Well, soon they started going to him every time they had any problems.

That's when my mind began to wander. I think that what I told them was much more interesting than what they were telling me. I thought maybe they were going to hang up some dirty linen. I always like to hear a little gossip, but I didn't expect any family histories.

Right above David's head was a window and I could see out at all the people on the beach. I started watching these two guys trying to throw another into the water. The one guy was running all over the place and dodging the other two. He was kind of the underdog, so I began rooting for him.

I never got to see what happened, because they ran out of sight, which was a good thing, because just at that time David said, "So I developed them into what they are. Do you understand me so far, Bro?"

"Sure," I said. I was almost caught off guard, which would have been bad, because he was going to all this trouble to explain.

"All right," he said. "We became very attached to one another. They came to me with the slightest problem. They believed in me. I soon became their strength, and therefore I had power over them."

I was really trying to listen and understand, but the three came running back into view again. I guess I can't concentrate too well. This time it looked like they were having a free-for-all. I would've liked to have gone out there and joined them, but I had to stay inside and be lectured to. Actually it sounded more like a sermon, because David started talking about souls and all. I wasn't following too close, until the three ran out of sight again. That's when David was saying, "... while I trained them and developed them into relatively good artists, I kept their souls for myself."

"I don't believe it."

"Ask them," he said.

I looked over at them and actually I didn't even have to ask, by the look on their faces.

Then Jim cut into David and told him he was evil and a sadist, but it didn't seem to have much effect on him. He just kind of smiled, then when Jim was all through, David turned to me.

"They've tried to leave, but they always come back. They hate me of course, but I am still their power."

David was a little on the conceited side, you could tell.

"You make it sound all so simple," Lena said.

"He's explaining it to a simple person," I said.

"I don't think Bro would care to hear about your masochistic traits, Jim." Which I didn't, whatever they were, but it sounded pretty personal and I thought they were getting too personal as it was.

"Why don't you ask why David can't leave?" Lena said. Actually she never really said it to me, she was speaking more to David. They were kind of mad at him since he told them that he had their souls and I don't blame them. I know I would never take it sitting down.

"Ever hear of a God without worshippers or souls?" Jim asked. "He needs us just as much as we need him."

"Not necessarily," David said. "It's not you I need. It's anybody. I can always replace you."

"I doubt it, Uberman," Jim said, "I don't think you could get just anybody."

I coughed out loud so to remind them that they had a guest. I don't like scenes too much, but they didn't take notice.

"No, it wouldn't be difficult," David said. "But why go to all the trouble, when I have you already?"

"I think you're afraid to try it with someone else. You're afraid you might not impress them with your brilliance. Also think how it would appear in front of us. You would be the fallen idol."

"That's all ridiculous," David said. "First of all you need circumstance. I would have to have the person right here with me."

It's hardly probable that I could go up town and expect anybody to follow me home."

It got pretty quiet and I could tell what everybody was thinking. I coughed a couple of times and moved around in my chair. "No," David said. "Bro knows my intentions." Which I didn't, but I put an expression on my face like I did. "He would form a defense immediately. It would have to be somebody unaware."

"Well, I'm all aware now," I said. I was kind of bluffing my way through. "It'd be stupid even to try."

"I think it would be more of a challenge," Jim said. "Also it would kind of be good versus evil."

"Who's the good?" I asked.

"You are," Jim said.

"I wish you would tell my parents that," I said, and then David said that sometimes I was so cute I was pitiful. Then Lena told David to shut up and leave me alone. She said she liked me the way I was, which I thought was right nice.

"It would really be a challenge," Jim said to David.

"And I'll accept the challenge," I said. "It'll be a cold day in hell when 'The Kid,' which is sometimes what I call myself, 'turns down a challenge. I'll challenge anybody to anything.'"

Actually this was the first time I ever got to really join the conversation. Before I was just some kind of object, like a book they were discussing.

"No," David said, "it would have to be somebody else."

Well, Jim called him chicken and all, but I could see that David still wanted to challenge me. I mean he had the same evil eye about him that Eddie, Arnold, and Griddle and most of my other enemies had. I was pretty good at spotting people who were up to something. I had to be or I would have probably been dead a long time ago.

They soon got off the subject of challenging and of themselves and I was glad of that because all it did was create ill feeling.

They started talking about me again, using the information they'd gotten earlier from me. You'd think I'd be interested in what they said, since it was about me, and I probably would have been interested too, if I'd known what they were saying, but I couldn't make much sense out of it. Jim said I seemed to have a lot more Id than I did Ego. Then they went on and said I had a little brother complex and that I led a synthetic existence. But all that was just a drop in the bucket of what I didn't understand.

At first whenever I came to something like that, I would ask them what it meant. I thought I had a right to, since it was about me, but I guess I got on their nerves, because what they decided to do was to write their findings down on a piece of paper and then give me a copy so I could take it home and look up all the words.

I told them that they didn't have to bother and then David asked, "Don't you want to find out something about yourself?"

You could tell he was a teacher all the way through, so I told him I was very anxious to find out what I was like and thanked him very much. He took out a piece of paper and they all gathered around it and started talking some more and writing things down.

Well, I got tired of listening so I decided to look around the cottage some. Just this one room was really interesting. It looked like a cross between an art museum and a public library. I mean they had pictures and books all over the place. They didn't even have enough shelf space and had to pile some on the floor. I don't think there was a blank space on the wall that didn't have a picture there. I didn't think too much of the pictures. They were really strange and hardly the things to look at with a hangover.

But just when I was going to look at the other part of the house, David asked, "Where are you going?" and I told him what I was planning to do.

"You just don't go wandering around other people's houses," David said, and then Jim said, "Oh let him. We've been through him. The least we can let him do is go through our cottage."

"No," David said, "I want to ask him a few more questions."

"I think you've asked enough," Lena said. "You should see the upstairs, Bro. It's very nice."

I looked over at David. He seemed pretty mad. I didn't see why he should be so sensitive about me seeing his cottage.

'Stay here for just a while longer, Bro," David said, "I want to talk to you some more."

"Why don't you want me to see the upstairs?" I asked. "You have a dead body hidden?"

"No," David said, "now get serious."

Jim was really getting a big kick out of all of this. He was laughing and all.

"You can see real far out in the ocean," Lena said, "you can see tankers and freighters."

"I've seen the ocean before," I said. "But why is it you don't want me to go upstairs, David? This is awful suspicious."

"That's not the point. There's nothing up there," he said. "I want you to stay here!"

"Oh! Ho!" I said, "now my curiosity is really aroused. I bet you do have a dead body up there. Or a still. Or an illegal printing press where you print money."

I stood up and pointed my finger at him like it was a gun. "I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to take you in. It'll go easier on you if you come along quietly."

Well, I went on like that and I was really putting on a good show because Jim and Lena were almost rolling on the floor from

laughing so hard. But David was one of these high-strung people and up about three octaves higher, because suddenly he rose from his chair and actually hollered at me, "Shut up!" He shouted right in my face, "Will you shut up!"

Well, the room got right quiet after that. I put on a real hang-dog expression and hung my head. I just looked down at my foot and moved it around. Nobody had too much to say.

Finally I looked up at David and said real pitifully, "All right, I'll leave."

Actually I didn't leave altogether. I just walked out on the back porch and stared at them through the screen door. I wanted to work on their conscience. That was a trick I learned from a dog I had.

Finally Lena came over and held the door open and told me to come on inside.

"Not until David says he's not mad at me," I said.

Lena shut the door and I heard them talking inside. Finally Lena said that David wasn't mad at me.

"Let's hear it from him," I said.

They talked some more and then David said he wasn't mad at me, so I went in, but when I looked at his eyes, I knew he still was. I didn't like David's eyes too much. I don't see why he couldn't wear sunglasses like most the other people at resorts do.

I went upstairs and looked around. There wasn't anything much up there. As a matter of fact it was the most boring part of the whole house. The living room was the most interesting, but while I was upstairs I decided to get a shower and wash up some.

While I was taking it, Jim called up and said that there were some towels in the closet. I thanked him.

A little while later when I was rubbing myself down, he called up again and said that they had decided to call me "Manchild." I told him that it was all right with me and that I had certainly been called worse things than that. He said that he imagined I had been, which I thought was right funny.

Earl Franklin Bargainnier

the bassoonist

ebony blackness
pierced
by green-yellow-purple globes
—phantasphorescence.

long column of sheer hell
held
in his sticky hands.

absinthe white
his face
as his splintered shoulder blades
strain to bring forth
Beauty
in the pleasure-traps of the wicked.

vermilion eyebrows
curl
beneath the blue-scarred forehead.
his eyes
are deep limpid puddles of reptilian green.

shirt of silken pink
limps
on his frame of skin-covered wire.

the floating bright lozenges of pure color
whirl—
sense-madness is over all.

the griffin dances with the phoenix
to the musical discord.
black and emerald
rises
from his sandalwood unit.

the sparrow people
huddle
in this nocturnal cave
praying
for death-counterfeiting sleep.

Beauty, thou wild fantastic ape
trying
to clomb the stairs to air.
You hopeless fool,
no murmurs,
eat the meal of death joyously.

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Carolyn See

Rite de Passage

*Sad to my heart is the shame
Which is done in Emain tonight.*

THE SONS OF USNAH

In old tales they tell us many wonders of heroes and of high courage, of glad feasting, of weeping and of mourning; herein ye shall read of the marvelous deeds and the strife of brave men.

How shall I tell of them? This being most assuredly a community of heroes, but heroes bereft—all cursed and left alone. They looked out of faces with a lemur's eyes, doing the deeds of heroes and minstrels, devising their own glad feasts (we had dry turkey sandwiches, courtesy of someone). . . . In which is told of the wondering wedding of a hero and minstrel, skilled on the saxophone, beloved of men.

They rented a place where scary commercial entertainment went on at night, having the feast in the afternoon. It was Sunday afternoon of course, all bleak and non-sunny. Cold winds blowing in from the ocean; nobody very good could come. Clouds and ill smelling haze all over the city, and at the same time, glitter, pale shine on the street. A Magic City! Home of heroes of yore, dead heroes all around. In the street occasional vespas with people on them, Hollywood gay people in English cut pants, and little walking old ladies. All of them (the background) walked measuringly, the road held them together.

The whole occasion being planned, the thing being scheduled, the guests come. They were brave men before now; they walk the street, count the blocks, gaze at the relatively unfamiliar unfamiliar-bars, remember the name, look for the crowd. There isn't any crowd, is this the day, the place? The guests check their scribbled addresses, walk straight to the door, peer in, half close their eyes, and go to have a cup of coffee somewhere, don't do to be early. They wait now, in clumps of two or three, in stainless steel coffee shops around the corner.

Inside the glistening, cheap-bar darkness, the wedding feast food is piled; looking pretty in yellow light and shadow, piles of celery and carrots, they don't cost much. There is a little cake with

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a sugar bride and groom, two bottles of whiskey. A little stack of paper plates. Hardly anybody is here yet, but truly, the tables are lined up in the shape of a \square wedge like the old days, the host and his lady will be on the raised platform to face two lines of honored guests. At the back end of the room somewhere, the churls stay, the freeloaders.

A lot of them are already here, the unlettered churls: *What do you know about chords? Oh, I own a couple of pair . . .* They buy their drinks from the house, but eye the table whiskey, and talk in a kind of eager way, waiting for feasting and saying nice things, calling each other *kitty* and *cat*, but in still low voices. They are pretty shy and diffident; nobody invited them. They carry themselves well in an orgy of afternoon loneliness—this essence of all the Sundays of god-awful warp and boredom you've ever spent—wearing their suits from the night before, dark blue and shiny, with wide shoulders.

The invited wedding guests come in alone, dressed up, most of them have presents in their arms, or a brown paper sack covering a present. The thing is this: Now they don't know quite how to act, do they think of their mothers? It has changed the funniness. The sight of the cake has stopped the joke. Each man comes in, and once inside, tries to sit down very quickly against a black wall, making futile gestures with his present. More guests arrive, a few men come in with women, taking places close to the high table, a woman uncordially looks at her watch, she is bored.

Two silent hours late, the procession of brave ones comes in. They finally arrive and graceful and proud they stand, goodliest of heroes and heroines to behold, as if they were drawn on parchment by the skill of a cunning master. And the guests fall back as the escort commands, and make way for the high-hearted man and woman, and gaze on them with glad eyes. Now many of them of high degree are there.

She wore a pretty dress of soft chiffon; she was about ninety-nine months pregnant, and all demented, an Armenian Ophelia, a walking green house. Orchids were pinned to her, and her shiny black hair fell down to her shoulders. She was a beautiful woman. She knew everyone there and moved among her guests with stately grace and courtesy. You couldn't tell one thing about the groom; you could hardly even see him.

Then the joyousness commences and many a red mouth is kissed. Some people start blowing up on the little stage, the general impulse being silent. By this is meant there are a lot of shouted invitations to play; nobody actually does. The groom doesn't, his friends don't. Ones who had come mainly to play : . . do. They aren't used to each other.

Now comes a time in this strange wedding party, a timeless twenty minutes or so where the pitch of music and voice is maintained in a single not altogether unpleasant sound. The bride presides over the high table, looking beautiful, once lifting the whiskey bottle to drink straight out of it. Her big eyes open wide as the guests come up one by one to bring her presents in the artificial bar light. All the presents are given; nobody can hear anything. Nobody can hear anything separately but the music.

Which is wry, a wry face. A man making a face at himself in the mirror. You could call it a white man's funk, semitic-Irish-Italian, a second generation *something*. It is the lament of a man sitting in a swept room, saying *roah, roah, roah* to himself, a man who is sad and knows it, he took a class in it. It is the lament of the cheap social worker, the paper cup drinker. It is the sadness of the Englishman raised on strong tea and rancid fat, or the disaffected Irishman with no heroic story. It is pretty wry music. There is a final single note piano solo and at a pointed invitation from the bride, they stop. They get off the stage. Shamefaced, they shut up their instrument cases, they finish up, they come down. The rest of the afternoon is quieter, sadder. The door opens and closes often, more people come in; they all ask each other to play. Here is someone famous; a shy giant with his wife and children, but he can't play, *Man I ain't got my tool*, he gives his present, sits down, orders a drink, eats a piece of carrot. He holds it gingerly in his great big hand.

They wonder vaguely who all is at the reception, they can't see anything in the orange colored gloom. After self consciously crying out and several false starts, a kind of grand march is organized to meet the bride and groom. Even with all the guests it is suddenly very quiet, some take advantage of the dark and don't go up the platform—where strippers carry on at night.

Pictures are taken, the wedding cake, the beautiful bride; *I think I'm supposed to be embarrassed*. From the affable host a cryptic *I'm so sick of getting busted*. And yet the two of them stand in this old fashioned splendor, curiously removed from any corruption. They are young, and they do have the courtesy that makes them heroic. And now again they greet the guests and take leave of them.

They all have to clear out now, weary and weak on the sidewalk, in dumb Hollywood at night. Now gleams the wandering moon beneath the clouds; now dire deeds come to pass which will enact the hatred of these people. (By which is meant, they will rent a canoe in Echo Park, and go out and stare for a while at the water.)

In some kind of old car, the couple drive away. In a few minutes everyone is gone. Inside they are sweeping the stage and

someone is playing the piano, all very deserted and corny. Sunday was bad, but Monday will almost certainly be worse. They have all gone home, even as at the last all joy turneth into sorrow.

Joanne de Longchamps

Lions, The Lions Are Lovely

An early apprentice to love,
lucky student in a likely school,
my time turned drowsy,
an ease of sun
and I, bold basker and bather,
grew gold with a golden lover.
Beasts of this beauty are tawny—
We lay down with lions of love
lazily rich and lenient
in groves of our pleasure.

See how the gift-making flesh
begins its dishonor,
coarsens the lyric hand,
demeaning donor and taker—
In a traffic with mirrors
it webs the sad watcher.
Lions, the lions are lovely,
long in their groves and leaping,
golden with giving.

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The Liberal View of Man and Society

The core of liberalism is its view of man and society. It gave rise to the liberal theory of culture, including political democracy. This central doctrine of our historic faith has been under attack not only from the communists and fascists, but from the friends of democracy and of our way of life. With the rise of Reinhold Niebuhr as our most respected and influential social and political philosopher (or prophet), it has become the mark of sophistication and "realism," even on the part of "liberals" themselves, to decry the doctrine. The purpose of this essay is to restate the view and to defend it against its "intellectual" and political despisers.

Quite naturally any such "ideology" that has been embraced by the people of different countries with varied cultural backgrounds over a period spanning three centuries cannot be characterized in a few neat, well-chosen sentences that will be true of it for all times and places. However, there are, I think, certain basic tenets that have been widely accepted, which may be taken as defining the position; namely, (1) everyone is capable of being a free, responsible person in society; (2) society can be safely built on individual freedom; (3) everyone ought to be a free, responsible person; and (4) everyone has a right to be free.

There never has been anything like a universally accepted way of justifying these principles. Some have attempted to do so by appealing to religious dogma, some by invoking right reason and natural law, some on utilitarian grounds, others by mere conventionalism, and so on. I shall simply offer certain considerations that will, I hope, elicit the assent of the reflective, open mind.

(1) *Everyone is capable of being a free, responsible person in society.* The term "free" and others of its family, such as "freedom," "liberty," and so on, are used and abused so often that they have mostly an emotive function. But we are here concerned with their informative use. To say of a person that he is free is to say that he is autonomous, his own master, sovereign in the realm of his own actions. All of which is to say that he is self-directing; that he decides what to do for himself, in terms of his own interests and his

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own knowledge or beliefs about the situation he is in, and according to principles of conduct that he himself adheres to, and, therefore, is not subject to the will or decisions of another except in so far as he himself, without external coercion, decides to so act.

By "a responsible person in society" we mean one who, although self-directing, acts without infringing upon the rights of others and within the limits of general well-being. In other words, one is responsible insofar as one, in exercising one's own personal sovereignty, does not compromise the sovereign status of any other and yet lives in peace and voluntarily cooperates in securing and promoting the community welfare. In short, to be responsible is to be moral.

The contention that everyone is capable of responsible freedom in society is not to be interpreted to include persons while still in the undeveloped state of childhood, except insofar as it refers to a potentiality to be realized in adult life; neither does it include those who are humanly "abnormal." Certainly there are some who are not capable of self-direction, and of course one could not be responsible without being autonomous.

Many deny that it is true of "normal" adults. There is a long tradition of pessimism about human nature in both secular and Christian strands of our culture. The secular version takes the form of psychological egoism. The position and its political implications were clearly stated by Hobbes in the seventeenth century. In the state of nature, he argued, all men, for the sake of private gain, safety, and reputation resort to violence so that "they are in that condition which is called warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man . . . In such condition, there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of death; and the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short."¹ According to Hobbes, the only escape from this state of war, in which each one, by nature an irresponsible person, tries to be his own sovereign, and is until he is forced by superior strength to subject himself to the will of another, is by a social contract in which all the people subject themselves to the will of a sovereign, who will, by superior force, rule absolutely. The sovereign, according to Hobbes, remains in a state of nature. He has no obligations to his subjects. There are no limitations upon his will but the extent of his power. He governs not with regard to the

¹ Hobbes' *Leviathan*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1929, p. 62.

well-being of his subjects but of himself. However, Hobbes believes that by nature he will strive to be as powerful as possible. Consequently, he will endeavor to rule his country so that it will be prosperous economically and strong militarily. But the great advantage to be derived from the polity is the substitution of the will of the monarch for the multiplicity of wills in the state of nature and thereby achieve order, stability, and safety under which industry, commerce, arts, and life itself become possible. Hence, Hobbes believed that men must trade in their freedom for security because they are incapable of being responsible in the exercise of it.

Egoism was dominant in classical Greek thought as well. In Plato's *Republic*, "Socrates" defends morality against the self-seeking view of Thrasymachus and Glaucon, who present in almost the same terms the Hobbesean view of man and society, only by showing that their view of self-seeking activity was superficial and grounded in ignorance of the real self. Socrates argues brilliantly that to act morally is simply to act knowingly and intelligently in terms of one's own genuine self-interest, which, according to his teleological view, is grounded in the nature of man. Man is so constituted, he argues, that if each one acts in terms of one's own genuine well-being, peace and harmony will reign in society. This is because, according to his view, it is far worse, in terms of one's own good, to do injustice than to suffer it at the hands of another. One's own reason, when allowed to function properly, according to Plato, dictates or prescribes justice. For it not to prescribe it or for what it prescribes to be colored or distorted by desire, constitutes a state of disease or ill health within one's moral self. The taint of original sin is present in Plato, however, in the form of ignorance, so that men, for the most part, cannot know what is just nor what is their true nature and genuine self-interest. Only a few exceptionally wise people can know, and they only after years of intellectual preparation. So, according to Plato, the many should give up their freedom and subject themselves to the will of the philosopher-kings.

The natural law ethics, which originated with Socrates and Plato and was developed by the Stoics, when free from both the Platonic and Christian versions of original sin, provided an escape from the moral viciousness of egoism by appealing to a more profound egoism and a rational order of the universe according to which each one by pursuing one's own genuine self-interest, the natural end of one's being, would be in harmony not only with one's fellow citizens but with the whole universe.

We find a completely unchastened brand of optimism grounded upon a modified version of natural law ethics in the political writings of John Locke in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Here vicious egoism is completely overcome. Man is a moral creature by nature, according to Locke, and this fact is not mitigated by

either the Christian or the Platonic versions of human corruption. With this unsubdued optimism we find the first clear formulation of the fundamental principles of democratic liberalism.

Locke has faith in the responsibility of men of all walks of life. Every "normal" adult knows the moral laws of nature and is a reliable judge of actions in regard both to himself and others. Furthermore, most of the people most of the time, he thinks, will act, because of a genuine moral concern, in accordance with the universal moral laws. Consequently, people can live together peacefully, for the most part, with each his own master without the burden of government. Man in a state of nature, without polity, contrary to Hobbes, would be in society and under natural law, according to which each would direct his own actions and be judge of others. If one should violate the natural law, any man knowing of it would be obligated to punish him. But each man, insofar as he acted in accord with the moral law, but no further, would be completely free.

Government is instituted among men, according to Locke, not to make society and peaceful living possible, but to relieve men of the necessity of judging and punishing the offenders of the moral law and to standardize penalties. Locke had only a negative conception of government. He did not conceive it to be an instrument for creating and executing the public will concerning problems requiring collective action because, for one reason, there were no such problems in his independent, loosely-knit, pre-industrialized society other than the enforcement of the natural law in the realm of individual action and the defense of the society against external aggression. Most problems other than those calling for police or military action were the responsibility of some individual or group.

The natural law way of working out of the dilemma of egoism through a more profound self-interest, although embraced by many political thinkers of the eighteenth century, was already doomed because its foundation had been cut out from under it. It was premised upon a teleological, rationalistic view of reality according to which everything has some natural end, a goal determined by its nature or essence, which, in the case of most things, it inevitably strives to realize, but, in the case of man, he *ought* to attain but does not have to. But this teleological view that had dominated Western thought from the time of Socrates had already given way to modern scientific naturalism, according to which essences or natures are relative to some man-made classificatory system and final causes, purposes, or natural ends give way to antecedent conditions and laws of "mechanistic" causation or uniform correlations. Consequently a new solution to the old problem of how, if at all, a self-bound human being could be responsible had to be forthcoming, if the newborn liberalism was to survive.

Some have appealed to a universal sentiment of humanity and others to the dictates of reason. Hume, in the eighteenth century, held that everyone has, in some degree, a sentiment of humanity that prompts one to approve an act that is in accord with human welfare and to disapprove any act to the contrary. He allows that this sentiment may not be strong enough in some to move them to act accordingly, but that it is at least capable of being aroused to such an extent by cultivation.

Kant believed that reason itself, in its practical employment, was the source of moral imperatives and that it could determine the will to action even though the latter was subject to the influence of inclinations. A felt obligation, according to him, was awareness of the tension between the influence of reason and of inclination on the will. But man can overcome his egoism because he is a rational being and reason can determine his conduct. The command of reason, the famous Kantian categorical imperative, is, in one of its formulations, "act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." In other words, do not make yourself an exception to the moral rules that you expect others to live by; that is, do not play favorites with yourself. It is simply an injunction against self-centeredness and the natural misrepresentations of self-love.

It was Joseph Butler, again of the eighteenth century, who struck the most devastating blow at the doctrine of egoism, although it has, of course, survived his attack. But ever since it has been a ghost not yet laid to rest. He points out that the classical doctrine of egoism was based upon a confusion. It failed to distinguish between being moved by an interest that was one's own, in the sense that oneself was the subject of it, and being motivated by an interest the object of which was oneself. Obviously only my interests can motivate me. And, too, for those motivating interests to be satisfied gives me satisfaction. But this is not egoism. To be moved only by an interest the object of which is the self would be egoism, but then this is impossible. Butler distinguished between two kinds of interests: particular interests that take a definite object, and general interests, like self-love, which has as its object the satisfaction of all of one's own interests. Now clearly one cannot be motivated merely by self-love. There have to be particular motivating interests before self-love can function at all. And if one has an interest in the welfare of others, or the public good, or justice, or virtuous action in general, calculation on the basis of the reflexive interest of self-love will promote other-regarding action rather than preclude it. There is nothing vicious about this kind of self-love. It is nothing more than a careful, deliberative attitude.

If it should be said that the doctrine of egoism is not an apparent necessary truth that has been fathered by a confusion, but

an empirical generalization to the effect that men do not have interest in the welfare of others or the public good, Butler would reply: "... there have been persons in all ages, who have professed that they have found satisfaction in the exercise of charity, in the love of their neighbour, in endeavouring to promote the happiness of all they had to do with, and in the pursuit of what is just, and right, and good, as the general bent of their mind and end of their life; and that doing an action of baseness or cruelty, would be as great violence to their self, as much breaking in upon their nature, as any external force."²

The Christian tradition, although it teaches that man is created in the image of God, has throughout its history emphasized the doctrine of human depravity, or "original sin," as it is commonly called. Reinhold Niebuhr's chief claim to fame is his success in reviving this doctrine in what was previously "liberal" Protestant circles and his interpretation of political situations in terms of it. Although the doctrine emphasizes the self-centeredness of man, it is not based upon the confusion that gave rise to psychological egoism. According to Niebuhr's interpretation, the doctrine means that man, because of his radical freedom, is aware of the precariousness of his personal existence and becomes anxious. In his anxiety about his security, he becomes totally self-regarding and makes himself the center of his universe, and thus, in his own view of things, he himself usurps the position of God. In this "paranoid" condition, natural man is so perverse that even what he thinks is good is evil and what he thinks is evil is good. Consequently, one's own efforts at salvation lead only to one's destruction. According to the Christian view, one can overcome this self-centeredness only by a religious conversion effected by divine grace, which results in the restoration of God to his rightful place at the center of one's view of things. One might, of course, say that the most important point of this account is not so much the restoration of God but in the dethronement of one's self and thereby overcoming the perverting self-centeredness.

No one would deny that men are self-centered, but it is a gross exaggeration to contend that this fact so perverts their judgment and will that they cannot know what is right and could not will it even if they did. The impartial spectator, the voice of reason, is as much a fact of human experience as self-centeredness. People everywhere believe that men are capable of being responsible, for it is held that taking account of other people's welfare, respecting them and their rights, and so on, are morally obligatory upon all of us. And certainly, as Kant maintained, to believe that we ought to do these things involves believing that we *can*. And if we believe that people

² *Fifteen Sermons Upon Human Nature*. London, 1726. Sermon XI.

are capable of being responsible, we cannot avoid believing that they are capable of freedom. We can make even a stronger case. We not only believe, but actually know as certainly as we know anything, that everyone ought to take account of the welfare of others, respect them and their rights, and so on; and, therefore, we know that we are capable of responsible freedom.

It is not denied that man has an inherent tendency to self-centeredness and its misrepresentations. To do so would be unrealistic. But it would be equally false to deny that he has a capacity for and tendency toward rationality and its objectivity. Any view of man that ignores either is only a half-truth. If some liberals have over-emphasized the rationality of man, some Christians have exaggerated his perversity even more. The fact seems to be that human nature is highly pliable and can be developed into either diabolical or saintly forms, or any degree between. This places a great responsibility upon the individuals and institutions responsible for the development and nurture of human character and personality. We cannot simply leave it to the unaided grace of God.

Liberals have usually recognized both tendencies in man. While firmly believing that men, by and large, can be trusted to exercise their freedom responsibly and to govern themselves, they staunchly believe that few, if any, can be trusted to govern others. So they argue for freedom of the individual positively from the fact of his rationality and negatively from the human tendency to evil that would be encouraged by positions of power over others.

(2) *Society can be safely built on individual freedom.* This is a correlative of (1). It might even be considered (1) seen from the perspective of society rather than of the individual. In any case, it emphasizes a fundamental point not sufficiently brought out above. Without its firm acceptance, democracy cannot hope to survive, for men cannot get along without society.

The criticisms of this thesis have, of course, paralleled those of (1). Plato, who lived in the period of decadence of the ancient Athenian democracy, maintained that in a democracy every individual clamors for the satisfaction of his own interests and no one for the community welfare or the common good. Consequently he thought that in a democracy there is either chaos or rule by powerful special interest groups for their own benefits with the community welfare being sacrificed.

Hobbes held that, if there were to be a society at all, there had to be a sovereign whose selfish interests were in some way identical with community welfare. As it was noted above, a monarch, according to him, naturally desires to be great and powerful, and the only way in which he can be is to head a great and powerful nation. Consequently, he seeks to build up and maintain the greatness and power of his country. Rulers whose selfish interests are not iden-

tical with those of their society as a whole, as in the case of a democracy, tear down and destroy the society.

James Bryce, in *The American Commonwealth* (1888), wrote: "It is an old maxim that republics live by virtue—that is, by the maintenance of a high level of public spirit and justice among the citizens. If the republic be one in which power is confined to, or practically exercised by, a small educated class, the maintenance of this high level is helped by the sense of personal dignity, which their position engenders . . . But if the state be very large, and the rights of all citizens equal, we must not expect them to rise above the average level of human nature. Rousseau and Jefferson will tell you that this level is high . . . Experience will contradict them . . . Hence the rule of numbers means the rule of ordinary mankind without these artificial helps which their privileged position has given the limited governing classes . . ."³

Bryce concludes that we may expect the following consequences from this characteristic of democracy: (1) "a certain commonness of mind and tone, a want of dignity and elevation in and about the conduct of public affairs, an insensibility to the nobler aspects and finer responsibilities of national life"; (2) "a certain apathy among the luxurious classes and fastidious minds, who find themselves of no more account than the ordinary voter, and are disgusted by the superficial vulgarities of public life"; (3) "a want of knowledge, tact, and judgment in the details of legislation, as well as in administration . . . Because it is incompetent, the multitude will not feel its incompetence, and will not seek or defer to the counsels of those who possess the requisite capacity"; and (4) "laxity in the management of public business. The persons entrusted with such business being only average men . . . may succumb to the temptations which the control of legislation and the public funds present. . . . To repress such derelictions of duty is every citizen's duty, but for that reason it is in large communities apt to be neglected. Thus the very causes which implant the mischief favor its growth."⁴

To continue a review of some of the attacks on this thesis, consider the words of Ortega y Gasset: "In a right ordering of public affairs, the mass is that part which does not act of itself. Such is its mission. It has come into the world in order to be directed, influenced, represented, organized. . . . But it has not come into the world to do all of this by itself. It needs to submit its life to a higher court, formed of the superior minorities. . . . For the mass to claim the right to act of itself is then a rebellion against its own destiny. . . . When the mass acts on its own, it does so only in one way, for

³ From Henry Steele Commager, ed., *America in Perspective*. Mentor Books, pp. 141-42.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

it has no other: it lynches. It is not altogether by chance that lynch law comes from America, for America is, in a fashion, the paradise of the masses."⁵

Those who attack liberalism not only claim that most men must be directed in their actions by a superior minority, but also in their thinking, especially in the realm of values. Richard Weaver, another who considers the whole period of democratic liberalism a state of decadence, writes: "There is ground for declaring that modern man has become a moral idiot. . . . For four centuries every man has been not only his own priest but his own professor of ethics, and the consequence is an anarchy which threatens even that minimum consensus of value necessary to the political state."⁶

Walter Lippmann, a strong advocate of the natural law version of democratic liberalism, in his book, *The Public Philosophy*,⁷ claims that the western democracies have in fact developed along the lines the pessimistic critics have maintained to be inevitable. He claims that they have lost the ability to govern. The people, or rather the fraction of them who vote, exercise a veto upon the policies and political fortunes of those who head the government. And yet, he claims, and with considerable justification, that they see every issue, regardless of how complex, in terms of black and white and speak only in terms of "yes!" and "no!" They are either indifferent or feel too strongly about a matter, and always judge in terms of the easiest and most pleasant course of action for the present. In time of peace, they are too pacifistic and favor appeasement of aggressors; in time of war, their hatred knows no bounds and they demand the total destruction of the enemy. In short, he considers the heads of a democratic country to be the ministers of a stupid, capricious, demanding sovereign, the mass of voters, whom they must always act to please rather than on the basis of their own judgment of what is best or right.

Certainly part of the western democracies' malady during the past four decades has been due to the increased role of public opinion in government. The cause for this is to be found in the greater interdependence of our society and of the world. We have become so closely knit that whatever happens to some affects all. The government has had to multiply its functions and activities manyfold in its attempt to keep functioning the vital processes of the extremely complex society and to maintain a state of general well-being. Because of this new, or at least greatly extended role of government, what it does immediately affects the lives and fortunes of all. Fur-

⁵ *The Revolt of the Masses*. Mentor Books, pp. 83-84.

⁶ *Ideas Have Consequences*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948, pp. 1-2.

⁷ Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1955.

thermore, with our television, radio, and morning and afternoon papers and the ever increasing educational level of the people, the whole nation is a gallery before whom our "statesmen" have to debate the issues of the day and make their decisions. And since the people decide at the polls who shall make the decisions, the politicians play to the gallery.

This creates a highly dangerous situation. One of two things is likely to happen. Either the "statesmen" become mere puppets of public opinion, with the consequent loss of the capacity to govern; or the "statesmen" develop controls over public opinion, with the people becoming cultural and political slaves. According to Lippmann, and he is not without some justification, the western democracies have fallen victim of the former alternative. The modern totalitarian states, both fascist and communist, have followed the latter course. The first, in the interest of a false freedom, leads to irresponsible government and perhaps destruction; the other, in the interest of effective government, leads to slavery and irresponsible dictatorship. Neither is justifiable.

While our officials' having to deliberate and act on all issues before the public gallery has forced them to follow public opinion on most matters of state, we have been led to condone, indeed to approve, this state of affairs because we, like the pessimistic critics, have confused *public opinion* and *public will* and have, therefore, in practice, attributed to the former the role and respect which we, in theory, attribute to the latter. It is of the utmost importance to make this distinction clear in all our political thinking, if we are to escape from the unholy predicament which Lippmann describes so brilliantly.

Democratic liberalism holds that *the will of the people*, or what Rousseau probably meant by "the general will," is sovereign. Indeed a democratic government is nothing more than a set of established procedures by which a society can discover and execute the morally right solution to any problem confronting it as a whole and requiring collective action by formulating and executing the will of the people. A case can be made for the contention that the will of the people about such a matter either constitutes the morally right with respect to it or is the only way in which the morally right can be known by the agent that has the right to act, namely, the society itself. The public will about a matter is simply a decision reached through a public (or representative) deliberative process which attempts to embody justice to all relevant valid interests and is concurred in by all parties because it is believed to be just or as nearly so as it is reasonable to expect. But certainly there is little reasons to think that the opinions of the majority, or even the unanimous opinion of the people, on the complicated problems of statesmanship, which are individually formulated independently of the

public deliberative process, are even likely to be sound, for public opinion in this sense is largely a product of ignorance, prejudice, biased propaganda, partiality, and emotionalism.

However, it is highly questionable whether the inability of the western democracies to solve the international problems they have confronted since 1914 is to be attributed, as Lippman contends, primarily to the irresponsibility of the citizen and the role of his opinion in government. Regardless of how responsible our citizens might have been or to what extent public will rather than public opinion might have dictated policies, our governments could not have solved these problems. A more basic difficulty shares the responsibility for the unhappy situation.

The only genuine solution to any problem of conflicting interests is the moral one; that is, a solution that embodies justice to all valid interests involved. The public will of a society, as formulated and expressed through its governmental process, constitutes or gets at the morally right solution to a problem only insofar as all the interests involved are embraced and represented within the governmental structure. A local city problem can be solved by the city government; a national problem can be solved by the national government. But a city government cannot solve a problem involving interests beyond the city; nor can a state government solve a problem that transcends its boundaries. If there is to be a genuine solution a problem of conflicting interests by appeal to the public will, there must be a government that is as extensive as the problem and thus embraces within its community all interests involved.

Hence even an appeal to the genuine public will, as distinct from the opinions of the majority, of the several democratic nations cannot solve international problems of conflicting interests. At a time when nations were more self-contained and self-sufficient international problems were fewer in number and less vexing. But the very nature of the democratic process demands that in a highly interdependent world with so many vital problems spreading across national boundaries there be a world government to create and execute a genuine world-will on these problems that defy solution in terms of existing political processes.

We may say, then, that even if the western democracies have lost their ability to govern by confounding the public will with public opinion and by confronting problems that do not lend themselves to solution by present political institutions, these facts do not confirm the contentions of those who claim that society *cannot* be safely built on the foundations of democracy.

In fact, as indicated above, those criticisms themselves confuse government by the public will with government by public opinion. Whether society can be safely built on individual freedom depends upon whether we can have government by public will without de-

generating into government by public opinion. And this turns upon the extent to which individuals can be responsible citizens in a free society. Now, part of being a responsible person is to know when one does not have adequate information about the facts involved and the interests concerned, and about such matters to defer one's own opinions to those in a better position to judge. In short, a responsible citizen would not demand governmental representatives to share his own partial, immature, irresponsible opinions on specific issues. Neither would he demand that his own interests be satisfied to the full regardless of the interests of others. All that he would require would be for his interests to be dealt with justly and to be satisfied to the extent that was compatible with full justice to all.

Of course the citizens should make their *interests* known to their representatives. But it is one thing to make one's interests known and to expect that they be dealt with justly within the total complex of interests to be considered, and quite another matter to make one's *opinions* about particular issues known and expect them to be accepted and followed. The responsible citizen judges the character, the general principles or political philosophy, the general ability, and the overall performance of his representatives and officials. And with wise and responsible men in office, he leaves them free to do their job well. There is, of course, always the responsibility of the representative or official to show the people that he has acted in good faith and to justify to them the decisions that he made or concurred in on their behalf. Responsible citizens, when informed, will concur in the decisions made by responsible representatives and officials in whose character, political philosophy, and ability they have faith.

It is not the case that democracy is a levelling process and fails to produce greatness and statesmanlike leadership. Democratic equality has never meant equality of abilities. It simply means that all people have the same right to self-direction of their own affairs. But it is assumed that one's affairs will be tailored to fit one's capacities. The more capable persons will tend to have more affairs in a free society and will have opportunity to exercise their greater abilities. It in no way prevents the achievement of greatness and the great from finding themselves in places where they can exercise their greatness. Of course corrupt, degenerate democracy, government by public opinion instead of public will, gives rise to demagoguery. But the correction consists in removing the corruption rather than the democracy.

Liberalism fully recognizes that if liberty is to be had along with effective government, the people must be responsible citizens and, further, if liberty and effective government are to be maintained in a society increasing in interdependence, the responsibility of the individuals of the society must increase proportionately with

the complexity of the society. This law of liberty may be formulated in the following way: $E \times L$ equals R over I , where 'E' means effectiveness of government, 'L' liberty, 'R' responsibility, and 'I' interdependence. According to it, if the interdependence of the society increases without a corresponding increase in the responsibility of the people, either effectiveness of government or liberty, or both, must suffer. If we succeed in keeping liberty constant, effectiveness of government suffers. The only way in which we can maintain the same level of effective government and liberty with our increasing interdependence is by a proportionate increase in the responsibility of the citizens.

No doubt it was an awareness of this inherent difficulty in democracy that was back of Jefferson's hope that America would remain primarily a simple, loosely knit agrarian society. Also similar concerns led Ghandi to oppose industrialization of India. But our course is set. Our industrialization cannot be turned back. We must live with our interdependence. If we are to have effective government and liberty, we must achieve a highly responsible citizenry. The liberal believes this possible, but to do it we must face the facts of life and shape our institutions accordingly.

Even if a society built upon individual freedom were seriously limited in certain respects, liberalism maintains that it is the only way in which a society can be given the character of a genuine community. There can be a society with other foundations, but a society is not necessarily a community. Slave societies have been common. They have an order and unity. However, the free and the enslaved do not enjoy mutuality of relationships and common objectives by means of which conflicting interests can be peacefully and justly resolved and human values maximized. Without individual self-direction and each one's being treated as an end in oneself and never a mere means to someone else's purposes, the mutuality of interests, reciprocal relationships and common objectives that define community life are impossible.

If the apostles of pessimism succeed in undermining faith in the responsibility of men, authoritarian totalitarianism will follow, for one blow democracy cannot survive is loss of faith in man.

(3) *Everyone ought to be a free, responsible person.* The significance of this thesis turns upon "ought." It is a simple term we all understand, but it is the simple, or nearly simple, that is the most difficult to explain. The complex is easily broken down and put together again. This gives us a sense of mastery that we can never have of the simple. We can only look at it from different perspectives and thereby extend our acquaintance and perhaps insight. So what can we say of "ought"? For one thing, it expresses the implications of a situation or a state of affairs for action, implications that impinge upon us as imperatives. To say "everyone *ought* to be

a free, responsible person" says more than that everyone is capable of being such; more than that society can safely be built on responsible, free citizens. It says everyone's being a free, responsible citizen is morally required; and that, therefore, any situation in which one is not free or does not exercise his freedom in a responsible manner is not as it ought to be, is not right.

Broadly speaking, there are two views about the nature of the requiredness expressed by "ought." One holds that it expresses a means-end relation, the requirement of something as a means for the realization of some end. If so, all "ought"-sentences are really of the form "If such-and-such is the goal, then you ought to do so-and-so." The other contends that there is a use of "ought" to express a kind of requiredness without necessitation that holds between one fact or a state of affairs and some other possible fact. For example, it might be said one's being free and responsible is required, not if this or that fact or state of affairs is to be an actuality, a hypotheticalal matter, but by virtue of the fact one is a human being, a person.

According to the first view, only something as desired, as a goal or end, can normatively require or demand something. So if there is something that is desired for its own sake and not as required by something else that is desired, it is not something that ought to be. However, it would, in all likelihood, be said to be "good in itself" or "intrinsically good." But these terms, according to this view, do not entail "ought to be," which is applicable only to what is a means to some end. The second position holds that a fact or situation, simply as an actuality, can normatively require or render imperative some fact or action. The real difference between the two positions turns upon the status given the thing desired for its own sake. The first, which is known as the naturalist position, holds that it is constituted a goal or end, a goal-in-itself, by virtue of the fact a positive interest, as a natural occurrence, is taken in it for its own sake, just as something is made a target by virtue of the fact someone shoots at it.

The second, or objectivist position, maintains that the goal or end is such independently of the interest taken in it. For something to be an end or goal in this sense is not for it to be desired, but for it to ought to be, for it to be normatively required. Furthermore, an interest or desire of which it may be the object is not simply a natural occurrence, but something like a sensory perception, a kind of cognition of it *as something that ought to be*, something that is *normatively required*. I happen to believe that this is probably the truth of the matter. Something may seem to be a goal or end when it is not; that is, one may have a false goal or end, a goal or end that is not really such. A desire may be appraised in two ways: first, in regard to whether what is desired is desirable even in regard to the

context of the specific desire; and second, in regard to wider contexts. The first is a matter of whether what is desired is actually required in the limited context; the second is a matter of whether it is required relative to a wider context even though it is required relative to the smaller one. A person's fatigue might genuinely require a vacation; and yet the wider context of his business might require that he not take one. And, too, a person might desire one when nothing required it. If one should act in fulfillment of a desire and yet find the attainment of the end itself not at all satisfying, but disappointing and frustrating, then the desire was illusory. What one desired was not desirable. We can be "mistaken" in our desires, interests, feelings and approvals. This is one reason for getting the advice of another, of finding out how an "impartial" spectator would feel about a matter. We attempt to validate our desires, feelings and attitudes. We appraise them as "rational" or "irrational," as "sensible" or not, as well "grounded" or "groundless" and the like. Such considerations support the objectivist's position. However, it is not essential for our thesis, for it may be established on either view.

The naturalist (or subjectivist) would say our thesis contends that everyone's being a free, responsible person is required as a necessary condition for the realization of something or other that is desired either as a means to something else or for its own sake. If it is only required for the realization of something that is not or might not under some circumstances be universally desired, our thesis cannot be maintained in an unqualified form. We would have to say: "If such-and-such is desired, then everyone ought to be a free responsible person." But some naturalists, John Stuart Mill, for example, say there is something that is universally desired for its own sake, namely, happiness. Each person desires his own happiness, and it alone, for its own sake. And for each, his prudential "ought" expresses what is required for its attainment. But the moral "ought" expresses what is required for the general happiness, the happiness of all concerned. Is it too desired for its own sake? Not in the strict sense in which each desires his own happiness, according to Mill, but in "a way" a society as a whole does desire its general happiness. Mill says that everyone looks with favor upon or approves only that conduct in others that makes for his own happiness; and, with this being so, the only modes of conduct (not individual actions) that can elicit the universal approval of a society are those that make for the general happiness, which embraces the happiness of each. It is of course assumed that only that which can elicit universal approval is morally right and ought to be. So each approves something because it makes for his own happiness, and yet it can be universally approved by virtue of its being conducive to the general happiness. Although the general happiness is not desired

by anyone, it may be thought of as though it were desired for its own sake by the society as a whole. Hence the general happiness is said to function as the moral goal, as desired for its own sake by a society. And whatever mode of conduct that is required for its attainment is said to be morally right and ought to be done.

It is a necessary truth, on this view, that everyone ought to be a free, responsible person. There cannot be even in principle universal approval within a society of a mode of conduct that would rob anyone of his self-direction, for if there were universal approval of it everyone would concur in it, and so no one would be deprived of his self-direction. Furthermore, everyone, desiring his own happiness, would attempt to decide for himself what to do in terms of what would promote it. If he should turn to others for help in making up his mind about something, or even to decide for him, it would be his decision to do so. One cannot count the resting of the prerogative of self-direction from him by another as promoting his own happiness, for it would be, according to Mill's view, for him to be used in furthering the happiness of another without regard to his own. But even if he should think of it as promoting his own happiness, then he would concur in it and consequently it would not rob him of his freedom.

Of course it is, in a sense, a necessary truth that everyone ought to be a responsible person, for it simply means that everyone ought to be the kind of person who does what he ought to do, which amounts to only a little more, if any, than everyone ought to do what he ought to do. We can look at it in a slightly different way. Everyone's being a responsible person is a necessary condition for the realization of the general happiness. This is so by virtue of what "responsible person" means from this point of view. But we shouldn't separate the two aspects of the thesis. While it is true that everyone ought to be free and everyone ought to be a responsible person, it is not true that one ought to be free even though he is irresponsible; neither is it true that one ought to be responsible even though he is not free, for one cannot be responsible without making his own decisions.

What I have done is to show that our thesis is true even if the roughly sketched naturalistic theory of value is correct. I must now show how it could be argued for from the point of view of the objectivist. One rather simple way is this. Man not only has the capacity to apprehend specific value requirements through his desires and interests, but the capacity to know through a process of deliberation what the total situation requires. The mere fact of having this capacity, of being a human being, normatively requires that he himself rationally deliberate his actions in light of the total situation (that he be a free man) and that he act according to his deliberations (that he be a responsible person).

If one is not convinced, there is another way of arguing for the thesis. As I have already said, according to this view, a desire or interest is the apprehension of something as needed or required by some fact or situation, as something that ought to be. If the interest is not illusory, it makes a valid claim for satisfaction, which is only another way of saying that it is a valid cognition. Therefore, the act that will satisfy it ought to be done in so far as the interest in question is concerned. And, in like manner, the act that would frustrate it ought not to be done. However, seldom do we have an act that is relative to only one interest. The doing of most proposed acts is required by a number of interests, but what is more significant is that their not being done is required by others. We may speak of an act's oughting to be done relative to a given fact or situation as expressed by a particular interest as a *prima facie* ought. Now when both the doing and the not doing of a particular act are *prima facie* oughts, what is the ultimate ought about the matter? What is it that the total situation normatively requires? If this question is construed as asking for a general truth about such situations and not for what would be specifically required in a given case, the only way to find out is to examine our rational critique of situations involving conflicting but (in themselves) valid interests. And we find the best example of such critique in the judgment of an impartial spectator. We may say in a summary manner, leaving confirmation to the reflective judgment of the reader, that in such a situation of conflicting interests, what morally or rationally ought to be achieved, to put it subjectively, is the maximum net satisfaction of all relevant independently valid interests within the limits of justice to all, for this is what would constitute verification that what was objectively required by the total situation had been achieved.

Achieving the maximum net satisfaction of all relevant independently valid interests is not merely a matter of satisfying the largest possible number of interests to the fullest possible extent. There is the problem of the interests that must be justly sacrificed. The net satisfaction can be increased by getting them to withdraw their claims, so to speak, so that they are not simply left dissatisfied. This can be done only if the person concerned comes to recognize that relative to the total situation his particular interest is invalid, and he himself concurs in its being sacrificed. But not only this. The interests that are not sacrificed, by and large, cannot be fully satisfied without the persons concerned concurring in what is done. Maximum concurrence is essential for maximum satisfaction. In a situation concerning primarily one's own interests, one must decide what to do if there is to be maximum satisfaction; in a situation concerning several persons in a somewhat equal way, maximum concurrence and thus maximum satisfaction can be had

only by a "collective" decision in which all concur, or by some decision procedure upon which all agree. Thus individual freedom, each one's deciding for himself what to do and each participating in or at least concurring in the decisions of any group to which he belongs, is a necessary condition for realizing what morally ought to be done in any situation of conflicting interests and, therefore, is itself a moral requirement. But this individual autonomy within society, as I have argued earlier, is not possible without moral responsibility. The individual in exercising his freedom must be informed of the facts of the situation in which he acts, morally sensitive to what is normatively required, and of good moral character. Otherwise his freedom, instead of being a means of achieving what is morally required, will be an obstacle.

4. *Everyone has a right to be free.* The concept of human rights was central in the thinking of democratic liberals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is a cornerstone in the theoretical foundations of our American way of life. Yet today it is discredited in the minds of many except on the purely legal level. It is often said that a person has no rights unless they are granted to him and protected by the government of his society. This is a product of our modern positivism. An empirical examination of a person discovers no features that are recognized as rights. So the question naturally arises: What does it mean to say that there is a universal "right" to freedom?

A right is an activity, or area of activity, of a person with which it would be *prima facie* morally wrong for anyone to interfere. We say 'prima facie' because there might be overriding reasons under some circumstances that would justify interference. For example, it would be *prima facie* morally wrong for someone to use my car without permission. Ownership is the right to exclusive use. For someone else to take it would be an interference with this area of activity of mine. But under some circumstances, like, for example, to rush someone to a hospital in an emergency, such interference might be justified. So interference is only *prima facie* wrong. Whether it is actually wrong in a given case depends on whether there is an overriding imperative.

Natural or human rights are those that pertain to a person by virtue of his humanity, by virtue of his nature as a rational being. Each one is, by virtue of his nature, under an imperative to be rational. It is morally wrong for one to interfere with another in such a manner that denies him the opportunity to live up to this imperative. In other words, what is necessary for obedience to the rational imperative constitutes a human right.

If one is to obey the rational imperative, one must, of course, deliberate one's own actions and decide for oneself what to do rather than being forced into submission to the will of another. This is

freedom of self-direction. It is the most fundamental right of all. There may be circumstances that justify interference with even this right, but if there are any, they are rare and of a very extreme nature.

We have a sense of human dignity. Man as a reflective, self-conscious creature, recognizes a status for himself that prescribes respect from all of his kind. It is constituted by the right of self-direction. A man is not only annoyed but indignant at any show of disrespect or violation of his basic right. Status as a *person* is very important to him; and while recognizing and making such a claim for himself, insofar as he is rational, he acknowledges its validity for others and his obligation to respect them. No validation of a claim for a human right for oneself can fail to apply equally to any other.

Kant stated the right to self-direction in the form of an imperative to treat a person as an end in himself and never as a mere means; that is, a person ought not to be used by another, ought not to be directed and controlled for purposes not his own; in short, people ought not to be treated as things.

It is in terms of the capacity for and the obligation and the right to be free that the liberal doctrine of equality is to be understood. Of course, in most respects people are very unequal. But the kind of inequality that liberalism is against is a hierarchy according to which anyone is subject to the will of anyone of a higher level. In this respect democracy is a levelling process. It claims that a man as such, and thus every person, is capable of being, ought to be, and has a right to be his own master, to be an autonomous person, and that to deny him this status is to do him the greatest possible injustice.

Liberalism has often been criticized for its optimistic view of human nature and its theory of progress. It has been said that it teaches the divinity of men and the escalator theory of history, according to which we are necessarily progressing. It is true that it asserts that man has the capacity for goodness and that progress is possible. Although some nineteenth-century liberals may have believed in the certainty of progress, no man who knows the facts of twentieth-century life will bet very heavily on its inevitableness. However, the neo-liberal of the mid-twentieth century still believes that whatever progress there is to be must be brought about through human knowledge and effort, and that over-all progress can best take place within a free society founded upon the self-directing capacity of responsible persons.

Henry Birnbaum

Systole

To begin
 time rushes and holds
 grows bold and waits
and yet is large
 greater than the spirit.
We feel the distance draw the strings
 the wings beating
 breathing

and seeking to die. At the center of life
all is like a pendulum
 all

 swinging
yearning for a stop.
The heart is the measure.

 We move from safety to safety
towards death.

The body is the frame
 locked
in a name.

HENRY BIRNBAUM has appeared in *The Carolina Quarterly* and other literary quarterlies. One book of his poetry, *The Cimon Passion* has been published by Oliviant Press.

A name the limit of science
 whatever begins wends into itself
 and ends
 but sometimes sweet to begin.
 Children coming to the window to see
 on the coast of sight houses coming
 under smoke and streets like shields.
 Or on an early hill wedges of birds
 cutting the skies back and forth
 returning.
 Whatever begins turns slowly in slowly towards sleep
 and anonymity a kind of sweet suicide
 starting at birth and the heart is sometimes
 kind.
 It is too clear to know and easier
 to forget that the senses beat
 into night.
 O give the drums a tap and lead us
 to the grave
 and all the while mothers sing
 lulala lulala.
 And when we hear astronomers telling how
 they listen to stars burning eternity
 in the night and their white hair
 bent before their scopes.

O love
 making curves
 of history bending
 around a name.
 Move along along
 all you giants and children.
 Come back birds
 come back.
 And begins again
 the child
 chuckling in the good babble
 lulala
 so that when we are carried
 clothed in pity
 in pity buried
 in tears descendant
 and a name
 for stone
 a name for fear.
 O remember remember
 the child begins
 and beginning dies.



John D. Keefauver

A Walk on the Stepped-on Side with the Man with Golden Hair Growing out of a Golden Toe

"He's jest a pore stepped-on young fella," the kind-thinking said of Dived Slinktoes, "that's awful proud of his golden hair growin' out of his golden toe."

"Dived is jest dirty and dumb-crazied," the bad-thinking sneered. "Effen he'd wash his toe once the gold and that dern gold hair would go 'way."

But even if Dived Slinktoes did have golden hair growing out of a golden toe both the kind-thinking and bad-thinking agreed that Dived Slinktoes was a stepped-on young man. Not that they knew why. His whole family was stepped-on. Nobody knew why. Fact was every dern body was stepped-on.

And no dern body knew why.

Least of all Dived Slinktoes.

Living in the bottom part of Texas in the bottom of the thirties, when the poor were getting poorer and the sun was dripping stepped-on red, Dived knew only that he was a sixteen-year-old that one morning jest a mite ago woke up to find that he had golden hair growing out of a golden toe.

From that morning on Dived Slinktoes was known as a different kind of a stepped-on man. He wasn't what you'd call an average fella.

Only thing Dived was sure of was that when he woke up and started to throw one foot over the side to the floor he nearly tore off the base of the bed. This was a hard thing for Dived to figure out: waking up and finding one foot tied to the bed, especially when it was tied with hair. His hair. Toe hair, too. Pretty golden-colored toe hair growing out of a pretty golden toe.

A puzzling thing, this, something new for a stepped-on man. But it finally got plain to Dived what had happened. During the

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night his toe had turned to gold and started growing its own golden hair, and by morning it had grown itself plumb around the wood-work at the end of the bed.

Dived got to thinking, got to figuring hard. Finally figured that in his stomach was a hair-growing machine that must have got out of control during the night. The growing motor must have started going backwards, full force, and started growing hair down to his foot instead of up to his head. Figured, too, Dived did, sitting like a newman in his sleeping bed, that since he always had a hard head and weak arches that down around his feet end would be the end the hair'd break through, which it did, he calculated proudly, admiring his growing gold, longer now by inches since when he'd first woke up.

Then there was the thing called gravity, his figures said. That there gravity was pulling for the feet to get his stomachful of hair. And his insides, too, they must be gold, else how could his hair become golden? Growing like a crazy thing, his toe-bound hair must have pushed part of his golden insides outside, and that's what his gold toe was: an outside popped-out inside toe.

Dived felt mighty proud of his new toe and brand new hair, and he hollered down to Poppa Slitz and Momma Oleo.

"Come on up and see my gold toe and my new gold hair!" and he gave his foot a gleeful yank.

Poppa and Momma and the kids came running on stepped-on feet, but when they saw Dived's new gold hair coming out of a sun-colored toe, they screeched and spun, complete. Down the stairs they thundered, howling that their boy "done got crazied and buttered and sewed his toe."

Dived laughed in prided-up glee, then gave his toe another yank. Dern thing was sure tied tight. Dern thing might never come loose. Which would never do, Dived knew. Fact was that even effen he was a fella that liked to lie a spell in bed, he didn't want to spend the rest of his life in it. Fella might get the bed habit, like his Uncle Partwater had did. Stayed in bed the rest of his life, he had; had to bury him in it. Like to never died, neither. Stepped-on, too, Uncle Partwater was. Nobody knew why.

Fact is everybody's stepped on.

And no dern body knows why.

So Dived yanked hard at the gold toe and at the gold hair, but neither of them gave nary a nevermind, neither of them gave a foot. And the hair was growing faster all the time, wrapping itself around the bed. Dived hollered loud again to all the Slinktoes clan, and one by one they sneaked back and gave him a helping yank. But the toe stayed fastened, the hair held tight.

Slitz got himself a knife, he got himself a saw. But the knife bounced off the hair, and the saw just yellowed its teeth. Then Slitz

brought a turned-on blowtorch and aimed it at Dived's toe, and Dived 'bout clawed through the stepped-on mattress, the fire flared him so. The hair wouldn't burn, the hair couldn't be cut.

Three days later, after a lot of figuring was done, Slitz sawed off the end of the bed into little pieces so that Dived could get his gold toe free.

Dived showed his golden toe and golden hair to all his stepped-on friends, bragging as he waddled about. For by now his toe hair was more than a foot long and growing all the time, and when Dived walked he waddled, his gold hair trailing behind him, his feet stuck out to the side spread-eagle like a duck. Even if he had owned shoes he couldn't have got his feet in them. It got to be quite a sight to see Dived Slinktoes waddling down Main Street, dogs snapping at his dragging hair, hair getting longer 'til he could hardly walk. Tripped him up and pulled him down, tangling up his feet. He'd take a step, and down he'd go. Up he'd get, and down he'd go. Up and down, down and up, grunting at the weight of all that hair, a real tiredy thing.

And the stepped-ons watched, and the stepped-ons gleed. 'Cause when an ordinary stepped-on sees a stepped-on that's uppity and trying to be different, the ordinary one snickers in real ordinary glee. For when one's a stepped-on, then all are stepped-ons, and golden hair growing out of golden toe don't make a nevermind. "He won't even part his gold hair on the stepped-on side," they let him know with a sneer.

Even Terateasa Vidasquishi, who ran a Mexican beanery and was a hot chili gal, told Dived that he was still a stepped-on guy. Even when they were making chili together and both on fire, she said to Dived, "Dived, the Lord's got you stepped on and he's got you stepped on right."

Finally Dived got plumb disgusted and took his golden toe, dragging his golden hair, and moved out of the bottom part of Texas. He'd go to the city, he'd go to New Orleans, he'd walk on the wild side, and he'd show them all he wasn't a stepped-on guy. He'd show all the stepped-ons that he was a trusty with golden hair and a golden toe who was out of the tank of stepped-on guys.

Dived hauled his hair into a freight car bound for New Orleans, bedding himself down on his curled-up hair. In Houstontown a stepped-on gal hopped on too, name of Kitty Didnt, she told him as she brushed his golden hair. "Effen it's golden," she offered with a stepped-on snarl, "then it's a no-good golden that's not the spend-ing kind."

"Not no-good neither," Dived wrangled. "It's a good gold fitten for the presidency."

"Presidence ain't fitten," Kitty Didnt returned. "Who can eat golden hair? Who can eat golden chicken hair in a golden pot?"

"T'ain't for eatin'. It's for showin'. And for sayin', 'Look, all you stepped-on guys, I done got me a golden toe with golden hair, I'm not a stepped-on guy.'"

But Kitty Didnt had nodded into the sleeping of a stepped-on dream, and the only gold in her dreaming were the copper pennies that Kitty Didnt have.

Dived wrapped his hair around her and let her nestle there. Pretty soon her warming made for him a sleepy golden dreaming, and his dreaming slept him all the way to New Orleans town.

They woke with a clubbing in their faces, a mighty bone-crusher swung by a beefy railroad bull. The bull wrapped Dived up in his golden hair and rolled him and Kitty off the car into New Orleans town, where was the wild side that Dived was looking for.

"Any side will do," Kitty hungered. "Any side that's a eatin' side."

Dived waddled after Kitty into the first side they came to where eating things were to be had. Her skinny chunks were jerking when they disappeared through a window of a blackened, closed-tight grocery store, Dived going in behind her. They smacked open a cash register, then gorged on chunks of bologna, but before they could get to the sour pickles a bluecoated swill ploughed Kitty's skinny thigh with a fat bullet from a looked-in window on Canal Street. Dived tried to run, but going out the window his golden hair tripped him up and threw him down, blocking Kitty's way, and the swill had the cuffs on both of them before Dived could say, "Good evening."

For even with a golden toe and yards of golden hair there's got to be some running. 'Cause when you're running there's bound to be some chasing, and when there's chasing there's always a stepped-on guy involved.

The swills tossed Kitty and Dived into a wagon, then hauled them to the wild side jail and booked them on breaking and entering. They took Kitty one way and Dived another, giving hardly a look to Dived's golden hair, except to yank on it a bit, while mumbling and shaking their round pure heads.

For in the wild side there's many a thing to see. And the swills have seen them all, and the swills let them be.

They threw Dived into Tank Ten, in with the rest of the class, and seeing his golden hair and feeling his golden toe, all the Tank Teners 'bout bust themselves laughing in wild side glee.

"It is a golden toe!" Dived thundered. "It is my golden hair!" And he made the hair ripple, the better for them to see.

But the wild siders only howled the harder, until the turnkey came and put the screws in deep. "If I hear anymore about golden hair growing out of a golden toe," the turnkey growled, "I'll turn the whole pack of you loose."

That mummied their lips, that matted their lungs, that muted their bottomed souls. You couldn't hear a rat drop, you couldn't hear a snarl. Stepped-on fear snowed cold on their heating talk; wild side fright iced their liquid lives.

For when a stepped-on guy makes it out of the wild side into a tank that's warm he's conned the best, he's done his ante, and he's got himself round brown chicken in a pot that's bubbling away his blues.

"Dived," whispered Better Half Sammy, who had cutaway legs, "you've got yourself a beautiful golden toe, boy, and yards of golden hair. And we're proud of you, boy, we think you're great. But jest be quiet about it, boy, don't spread it around for the turn-key to hear."

Whispered urgent yesses came from all stepped-on lips. "The stuff's real creamy," said Never Zippered. "Like a ship come in," quieted Natural Worm. All voices hushed Dived's loud golden talk. All voices asked Dived to let them stay in their Tank Ten dreams.

For all the voices remembered.

And all the voices cared.

"Gentlemen of Tank Ten," Dived told them in a real prided-up tone, "I'm mighty pleased and proud to hear you takin' holt of my golden toe and talkin' over my golden hair." And he gave his hair a little whip to show them he cared.

"It's a recipercal understood," agreed Little Old Lady. "Consider it glued."

Dived gave them all a thanking glimmer, handed them all a stepped-on smile. He was finding his wild side right quickly, right in the bottom of Tank Ten. He figured he'd stay in Tank Ten where he wasn't a stepped-on guy.

Where, he hummed—

The stepped-ons come, the stepped-ons go,

But the golden hair's remaining.

But Dived's toe hair kept growing, growing day and night, until after a few weeks it was crawling out through the bars and tripping up the swills. The swills said he was doing it on purpose, the swills told him dern! to quit. They got axes and started pounding at it but not even a dent was made. They got lab men to pour acid on Dived's growing things, but the acid only made holes in the floor.

And made holes in Dived's Tank Ten dreams.

Because the swills finally gave up and threw Dived out of his Tank Ten home. They said it wasn't respectful to have hair growing all over the place. And besides, there wasn't anymore room.

So sadded Dived Slinktoes departed his Tank Ten tank. He waddled, his golden hair sweeping along behind him, holding some of it to wipe away the tears, out on to Perdido Street, which was

in the middle of the wild side stew. Right away Dived felt better when he saw where he was. He gave his golden hair a snap, and it sang a wild side song; it sparkled with wild side dew. Onward golden soldiers, he hummed in a snap-happy way.

"Goodbuddy," a voice interrupted, "pardon me in your humming reverie, but my name is Friendly Workingman and I'd like to introduce myself," he laughed in his hollow stepped-on way.

"I'm Dived Slinktoes," Dived offered, "the man with golden hair growing out of a golden toe."

"You don't say," Friendly glittered. "You and me ought to go into business, goodbuddy. You and me ought to cultivate."

Dressed in stepped-on clothes, with a face creased by gin and bottles, Friendly Workingman felt once lightly the golden hair and the golden toe.

"As long as the business is in the wild side," Dived said, "it's good enough for me."

"Come with me, goodbuddy," Workingman offered friendly, "and I'll put you on top of my totem pole."

Goodbuddy took Dived by the golden hair and guided him through the wild side, chanting to the getting-bigger curious crowd, "Come to Friendly Workingman's place and see the original man with golden hair growing out of a golden toe." With a wild side crowd behind him, Friendly took Dived to his upstairs stepped-on room where he lived with Short Handle Louey, who sold and stole pans and pots throughout the wild side and who knew all sides of the wild side well.

Stopping the group outside at his door, Friendly picked up Dived's hair and helped him up the steps to the room, where they found Short Handle in bed counting pots while eating out of a pan.

"Short Handle," Goodbuddy said, "this is the original man with golden hair growing out of a golden toe. Him and me are going to cultivate a business way, but first he wants to know about the wild side and it's the wild side you know well."

Short Handle brushed a pot aside and stretched-out his fishing-pole legs. "The wild side," he said, "is where nothing begins and nothing ends, and there's nothing in between. The wild side," he explained, "is where nothing is trying to be something, and something is nothing but a stepped-on guy." And he turned back to the nothing pots and began to count his nothing pans.

"Not only is Short Handle a selling pot and pan man," Friendly advised Dived, "but he also has a business on Perdido Street that's strictly a night time chore."

"A profession for my leisure hours," Short Handle said. "Something to do with my nothing time."

"When his working day is over and his laboring sweat is done," Friendly instructed.

"Like eating tater pie," Dived remembered.

"Like taking the bacon home to momma," Friendly said, "only there's many mommas and it's not bacon they're looking for."

"It's tater pie," Dived reminded.

"Goodbuddy," Friendly glinted, "after you and me cultivate a spell you'll have all the tater pies you can eat. Golden tater pies, boy."

"How you gonna cultivate?" Short Handle wanted to know as he licked clean a pan and set it up for sale.

"Jest you watch." Friendly pushed a cobwebbed chair up to the window facing the front street, then helped Dived to the chair and sat him nicely in it. "Jest stick your foot out the window, boy, the one with the golden hair."

"Funny way to cultivate," Short Handle snickered. "Fumergate is the word you ought'er be saying."

Friendly popped his head through the window, waved at the front street crowd, and, after fluffing out Dived's dangling golden hair so that it fluttered nicely in the breeze, yelled, "Step right up, wild siders, and see the only man alive with a real golden hair growing out of a real gold toe! Only twenty-five cents. Step right up, before this good man dies!"

Then his head came back through the window like a shot, and down the stairs he tumbled. At the front door he collected two bits from each rich wild sider who muttered up to the room and then awed over the funny-looking hair growing out of a funny-looking toe.

"By Jesus!" they mumbled, sidling their eyes up for a close view. "Must be more than a stretch in the pen is long."

While Dived rested proudly in his business chair, happy Short Handle collected cultivating coins in a shiny pan. Only the wild side god, known as Mr. Chief Turnkey, would ever know how many quarters Friendly & Co. would have collected if the bulls hadn't come marching in to break up Friendly's business ways. Such a crowd gathered outside the window garnished with dangling golden hair that wild side traffic couldn't get through; started ramming through the mob and busting the weaker wild side bones, the traffic did, so the bulls put the damper on the looking, put the nix on the first money-making business Friendly had had in many a day.

After a few hours of cultivating, Dived had to haul his money-making foot in from the high-up window. In saddled pride he curled his hair inside and on the bedroom floor.

"Goodbuddy," managed Friendly, "we've been truly shafted. But don't you worry, don't you lose none of your golden sweat. For I, Friendly Workingman, have another business outlet, or inlet,

if you will, for we're gonna let the greenery in, we're gonna let it enter.

"Short Handle," he continued, "let us go to your place of nighttime chores on Perdido Street, and see what the lady of the house has to say about our friend with the golden hair using her residence for his golden cultivate. Dived," he offered, "let us proceed."

They all went down to Perdido street then, with Friendly leading the way. Dived swished along behind, his trailing hair cleaning up Perdido street like the street had never been cleaned before. A wild side crowd soon gathered and walked along behind, a-looking and aweing and feeling wild side fine.

They weren't on Perdido Street long before Short Handle began his own business ways. He collared a lone walking-on-the-wild-side gent, honeyed him in close with a queried, "Looking for somethin', bub?" Said it with a stepped-on smile so that the gent and Dived could see what his business was. Then Short Handle took the gent by the gent's answer, "Maybe," took the gent 'cause Short Handle knew what the gent was wild-siding for. Took the gent and Dived and Friendly to a place on Perdido Street where the bottom of the stepped-ons live.

Because if you want to forget you're a stepped-on you go where the bottom stepped-ons live. Because when there's a bottom below you you become a second-story stepped-on guy.

They went into a house on Perdido street and met the inside madam, a big slab of a woman name of Juicy Loo. Right smartly and proudly, after she swallowed down with a quicklike gulp the climbing tickling bug of seeing Dived and his hair hanging all about, she showed them her girlies, then asked them if they'd like to pick out a few.

"No thank you, Juicy," Friendly oiled her kindly. "Me and my partner—meet Dived Slinktoes, Juicy—have come to ask you if you'd like to join us in our cultivate. We have a proposition, Juicy, that will increase your quarter-coin inlet, not to mention your customers, too."

Juicy and her girls eyed Dived as if they'd never seen golden hair growing out of a golden toe before. Dived felt a new golden gleaming as the girlies fingered him in their looking way.

For a stepped-on don't never hardly get a looking from pretty girlies ever, and when he gets a looking he gets a feeling that he wants a snuggling Sue.

Dived started to meander toward a girlie, but Friendly collared him with a jolting, "Dived!" then, softening, said to Juicy, "Dived is a different sort of wild sider as you can plainly see."

"True," winked Juicy Loo.

"Dived," Friendly wanted them to know, "can intake coined quarters merely with his hair foot stuck out the window, as I will show you," which he did, taking Dived and Juicy to a top-stairs window and demonstrating the cultivate.

So Dived and Friendly and Juicy Loo went into a business cultivate, with the intake quarter splitted up three ways. Dived took, too, an occasional girlie to the rooms where bed-romances grow. Together they fused and lighted the souls of their washed-out dreams, until they could see that the bulb was about to blow.

"Just you and me and golden toe hair," Dived told the long-gone girlies, speaking from the corner of a hollowed-out lung.

"Gold hair out of your toe don't make no snuff of a nevermind lessen you got gold in your pockets too," and the girlies straightened out their backbones to let Dived know they were through.

Dived's hair kept growing, crowds kept coming, and the quarters rolled in like fools. When the hair hit the street and young wild siders began to swing on it, Friendly just moved Dived up to the third story of Juicy Loo's place. Higher and higher Dived kept moving, until the time came when he was sitting on the roof. His gleaming golden toe hair lay in the street below now, and, sadded, he watched cars run over and dirty it, saw people trample it in wild side mud. Came, finally, the day when traffic couldn't get through the tangle of hair; then, came, too, again, the marching-in bulls, who halted the spectacle and the quarter intake and ended up quickly the cultivate.

"Don't you fret your thinking head," Friendly told Dived as Friendly reeled in the golden hair. "I got a business in the wild side, too, where we can continue the cultivate. It's not much for making money, but it's nice in a nothing way."

Friendly put Dived and his hair in a wild side wheelbarrow and wheeled him up a catted alley and through a bloodied fence, leaving Short Handle behind 'cause Short Handle began to question another walking-on-the-wild-side gent. They crossed caved-in streets and went around sprawled-out bodies, until they stopped at a skull-like door where Friendly gonged a rusty Chinese bell. At the sound of the gong, Friendly picked up Dived and lively puffed with him over dead teeth up the stairs into a stepped-on top-story room that didn't have much roof.

"My nothing business," Friendly prouded, arcing his arm to show off the room's interior. "Where I spend my working hours keeping a chicken in the pot."

"A purty business," awed Dived as he looked at the hanging purties dangling from the ceiling.

Blownup balloons, fat and many colored and held by bubble gum, hung drying from the ceiling and from the rusty chandelier. All had purties painted on them, each a living scene of a dying bed-

romance team in action, depicted by a stepped-on couple acting out a blownup second-story dream, all drawn by Friendly Workingman in his wild side time.

"On Perdido Street I sell 'em," Friendly advised. People need 'em, to give their eyes a treat and to give their lungs a twirl. But it's a sad time when old men buy 'em and can't blow 'em up. It's a sad time when one lung's low."

Dived nodded in sadded understanding as he picked a fat rubber sausage from the bubble-gummed ceiling.

"Goodbuddy," Friendly laughed in his backslapping way, "the cultivate will never cease. We will merge into the cultivate my balloons that here you see. If you will kindly pull a chair up to the window I will show you how it works."

Friendly sat Dived in front of the window and had him stick his hair toe outside. Then, instead of letting the hair unreel toward the street, Friendly tied some balloons on the ends of the hair and threw hair, toe, and balloons out the window. Up the balloons went with Dived's golden hair shimmering below. Out the window shot Friendly's head. "Come right up, you wild siders!" his voice thundered. "Only two bits to see the original man with flying golden hair! Hurry up, you wild siders, before this good man dies!"

It was a wild side treat to see Dived's golden hair fluttering up to the dancing balloons with purties painted on them. Even from outside the wild side, lookers started coming, cleanlike people who'd never once been stepped on, whose faces bubbled brightly like chickens in the pot. Quarters mounted up from the intake routine, and Friendly on the side was selling painted purties, too. Like a carnival it was, when Short Handle set up a stand and started selling his pots and raffling off his pans. Never had the wild side seen such a cultivate. Friendly purchased with his working money a P.A. system; like thunder hunting for a storm to happen in, his voice boomed a welcome to New Orleanstown.

Which was a mistake.

Which he ought to have never done.

'Cause the thunder in his voice started Dived's golden toe a-twitching, and the twitching got the golden hair a-jerking, and the jerking made the balloons dance themselves to an airless death. Just as the top of Dived's golden hair was disappearing through a cloud, the painted purties gasped and started falling. All over New Orleanstown hair and balloons fluttered down. Over streets and houses the golden hair of Dived Slinktoes snuggled up and draped. There was hardly an alley or building that his hair didn't know about. It was the most inquisitive hair that the town had ever seen.

And, bad thing for the cultivate, clean-fingernailed non-wild siders got a close-up view of the bed-romance team in action on the

balloons of Friendly Workingman, and saw what a working couple can do.

'Cause the day after the hair and balloons fell the downstairs Chinese gong gonged, the stairs rattled with thumped-on feet, and bursting into the business room of Friendly Workingman came a blue-coated bunch of cops on the wild side beat, led by a plainarmed man with a face to bust all purties if a purty he should ever meet.

"This is a raid," the plainarmed man informed. "Stand where you are and don't move any of the muscles."

"Goodbuddy," Friendly quieted the busting-in law, "this is merely my business room, as you can plainly see. Us of the wild side has businesses, too."

"Business of purties," Dived intoned, trying to hide a purty under his golden toe.

"This is phonygraphy," the plainarmed threatened, stabbing his eyes toward the ballooned businesses still hanging from the working ceiling. "We gonna haul you and your partner in."

"But I got me a golden toe and growed me golden hair," Dived wanted them to know.

"Don't make nary a nevermind," the law advised.

But yards of toe hair did make a nevermind the law found out when it tried to reel Dived's hair in from all over town and get him into the wagon. Friendly hair, it had become acquainted with many places, entwining itself into its own personal cultivate, and it didn't want to budge when the law said so.

The plainarmed was angry, he was smoking like a fat cigar. Leaving his bulls behind him, he stomped out of Friendly's business place. When he came back in a little bit, he had a man with him with an axe and a man with a saw. They chopped and sawed, but Dived's hair was never dented.

For almost a week they tried to get Dived's hair separated. Scientists came in with test tubes and acids, and medical men were called in with toe hair books. But while Friendly chuckled and Dived munched on tater pies Dived's hair continued to keep its own personal cultivate; it refused to be separated from its own gold toe. The pros finally gave up and went back to where they all came from, and Friendly thought they were gone for good.

But a few days later an army truck rumbled up and stopped at the front of Friendly's business place. Between tater pies Dived watched a military crew unload a wooden box. Out of the box they tumbled a folded something; out of the something stuck a tubelike thing. Then, as Dived watched, they blew up the something with a machine, and the something turned out to be a big balloon. Gently then they let the balloon up, reeled out from a cable from another machine, until the balloon was beside Dived's window. Politely then a second louie said: "If you will, Mr. Slinktoes, kindly

step into the basket you see hanging below," where there was, Dived could see, a cozy nest with a hole out of which his toe hair could hang.

Now, this was something different in wild side treats; this was something he could write home to Maw about. Before Friendly could stop him, before Friendly could figure out, Dived stepped into the basket along with his tater pies. Then up went the balloon, up went the basket, and up went Dived Slinktoes, his hair going up, too. Up went the only man with golden hair, until he disappeared through a cloud, until the bottom of his hair was on a level with the highest wild side roof. Then the cable stopped upping, the hair stopped moving too, and the military crew left a man by the cable machine and drove off for the day.

"Goodbuddy!" Friendly yelled up the rope, "do you hear me!"

But the only answer Friendly got was the falling of a crumb of tater pie.

For when a stepped-on has made it to the top of a balloon, he ain't likely to be speaking to a mere second-story guy.

Every day the military came back to the cable machine, and every day they sent in a box tater pie up the cable alongside the hair, pulled up by Dived to his own balloon. Every day they let the cable out a bit, so that the bottoms of Dived's growing hair was always on a level with wild side roofs. And everyday Friendly, watching the activity with business eyes, tried to figure out a new cultivate.

One night he dreamed what his figuring hadn't been able to do. And the next day he painted a lot of purties, and slipping them around the cable let them slide up high, 'til they met up with Dived's dangling gold toe hair, stopping and dancing there. A brand new cultivate it was, as pretty a one as you'd ever see.

Friendly let the wild siders know about it with his P.A. blast. "Step right up, you wild siders!" he advertised, "and get a close up view of the golden toe hair of the only man alive living in a balloon! The only man living with ballooned gold toe hair! Hurry up, you wild siders, before this good man dies!"

Friendly kept the cultivate going, kept the quarters on the coined intake. Once in a while he let Short Handle send up a pot or a hard-to-sell pan. And every so often he sent a note up to Dived in the tater pie basket, and he'd always get a note back. The notes were the happy kind, always with chunks of cheer. They always ended up by saying, "Send me up more tater pie."

'Cause Dived had found his wild side, where golden toe hair was appreciated, where it was known what gold hair could do. Where he had all the tater pie he wanted, where his hair dangled down on the wonderful wild side, down where the stepped-ons live.

Gene Frumkin

The Oneness of the World

Between the Talmud and the appletrees
there is the swaying bridge of the working day,
and there I go my nimbus way
above the earth of cockatoos,
below the sky of bees.
At times the sun is the color of a bruise.

A quiet man between the buzz and squawk,
I do my work in blind and spider calm,
going my bridge with hardly a qualm.
On one side is the cider smell,
on the other rabbis talk.
My will swings back and forth, tongue of a bell.

How perilous to be so high, alone,
to hear no apple in the synagogue,
to hear my own long monologue
beside the silly croak of Polly
and the bees' furious drone.
The bridge creaks and I fear my balance is folly.

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I climb by light the thought of Aristotle
whose catalogs of old intelligence
ought raise my mood to eloquence.
His golden mean is safe as banks
or cork tight on the bottle.
I trust him but, oddly, grow more fond of cranks.

Or Saint Teresa, nun of swoons and pain,
who gave her body to God the Spouse, and grew well.
I, to love under equal spell,
must, like Everson the poet-friar,
unsex myself of Man,
and pray that nun to be my wife, my prior.

I laugh my fill of possibilities,
there, high above the bees, below the fish;
at night the star is in the wish.
To be the salt within the thought
that ebbs and flows with the seas,
that is all. Among the stars my fish is caught.

It is I, that dolphin tossing in the light,
from the moon's candles (lances on the water)
through the broken, burning ways of laughter
to the tear of melting wax itself.
There is no end of night,
the day is always, I fly beyond all gulf.

I leave the bridge and pluck the simple apple.
It's red, it shines, its meat is juicily fat:
I knew a rabbi who smiled like that.
All saint and thinker sums are zero.
My big bite is my chapel.
I taste the world, and am my own hero.

Inky

"Every morning when I wake up I ask myself, what can I do today to help the People's Front?"

She gripped us with her low deep voice, almost masculine in its register, and the dedication that shone in her face. Her eyes, dark, made darker by the heavy brows that shadowed them, were on the chairman, but we all felt their burning look pierce us through and through and we shivered in terror and delight. This was the authentic embodiment of the selfless consecrated comrade. How lucky we were, we thought, to have her as a member of our Party unit.

She could have had any office she wanted, but she refused the honor of chairman and took on willingly, gladly, all the humbler, time-consuming, burdensome and thankless tasks. She had served at one time or another as unit treasurer, educational director, literature agent, *Daily Worker* agent. She wouldn't accept nomination as a delegate to regional or national Party conferences; that was a distinction for others. But she went anyway, on her own, as an observer, a nobody, and when later she supplemented the delegates' accounts of what had transpired, no one was surprised that she had been so much more observant, that her summaries had so much more depth and scope, and that she was able to show, with such keen analytical powers, the connection between the decisions reached by the conference and the events in the Soviet Union, China, Argentina, Spain, Hawaii, Greece, and Akron, Ohio.

The name Inky seemed right for her because she was so dark, but it had nothing to do with her appearance. Her name was really Rose, and as a child, on the East Side, her parents had called her Rozhinka, Yiddish for Little Raisin, which she must have resembled. In time Rozhinka was shortened to Zhinka, which the kids in the neighborhood found easier to pronounce, Zhinky. It was Joe who dropped the Zh, Joe the wonderful guy, who brought her into the Movement, who was her lover, and who went to Spain in '36 to die for the People's Front.

The Inky we knew, the person who lived only for the Cause, dated from Joe's death. She never mentioned it, but as she changed

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before our eyes we could see that it had become the most important event in her life, and that if she didn't brood openly on her loss it lay just below the surface, dominating everything she said and did. She lost weight, the pallor in her olive skin became more pronounced, and she took to drinking twelve to fifteen cups of coffee a day, and to chain smoking.

I learned these things later, after I had been transferred to the unit. It was the visual aspect of her that struck me at first, the intense face, the fondness for coffee and the constant smoking. She had approached me right after the first meeting I attended and asked me to have a cup of coffee with her at the cafeteria. I had no idea what she wanted and waited while she drained the first cup, black, no sugar, in three big gulps, taking a long pull on her cigarette in between and swallowing the coffee while the smoke jetted out of her nostrils. (The drag had burned down so much of the cigarette I would not have been surprised if the exhaled smoke had steamed out of her eyes and ears as well.) "So, Malcolm," she said, after she had returned to the table with a second coffee, "and what do you do with yourself?" She pronounced my name Moll-come, with the accent on the second syllable.

I was a complete stranger to the members of the unit, but it was like Inky, I thought later, to lose no time in taking inventory of my interests and my activities. I was not at all surprised at her curiosity and answered her questions soberly and directly, as though she had a perfect right to ask them. I was accustomed to the Party and its ways.

I told her I was working on a WPA project, three days a week, copying blueprints.

"You're an engineer?"

No, I said, my training had been in architecture. The depression had interrupted work towards a degree. I was what was called a draftsman.

"Are you from around here? You don't talk like a New Yorker."

"I'm from Knoxville," I said. "I came to New York in '31, looking for work, and I've been here since."

"Married?"

"No."

The conversation went on like this for a while, question and answer, question and answer. I lived in a furnished room on West 46th. I had acquired some friends, unattached like myself, and we spent a good deal of time together, playing poker, and picking up girls at such places as the Palisades Amusement Park. (I glided over this quickly.) I went to the movies occasionally, when I could afford it. I read a book now and then, not too many, mostly fiction. I didn't belong to the library. Yes, I was a member of the WPA union and

active in it. And so on. There wasn't much to tell and under her fixed gaze I felt embarrassed and wished there had been more.

She made no comment as I talked, but guided me with an occasional question, personal, to be sure, but directed toward me not as a private individual but as a political animal. And when she seemed to have gotten a fairly good account of how I sized up the human condition and what I was doing about it, she began to put to me the questions that mattered most to her, questions that to an outsider might have sounded critical, since they seemed to call attention to my shortcomings, but were really intended to be helpful, because by implication they suggested how I might be a more effective Party member and therefore a more useful person, to society and to myself.

How well did I know the people on the project? The members of the union? What were their interests? What problems did they have that they recognized? That they didn't recognize? What was I doing to help them see their problems, understand them, do something about them? Was I paying particular attention to the more politically conscious? To make them more active in the union? Recruit them into the Party? Had I read Browder's report to the last national Party conference? J. V. Stalin's Problems of Leninism?

Her manner, in which toughness and tenderness were strangely mingled, moved me. She reminded me a little of my favorite teacher in grade school, a motherly type, who had been the first person to take an interest in my drawing and through whom I had been encouraged to take up architecture as a career. But no two people could have furnished a greater contrast. Thinking of Mrs. Bates' tall bony frame and the warm smile that lit up her big-mouthed homely face whenever we talked and looking now at Inky's short stocky figure, the lank black hair cut in a short bob, the broad face, the small mouth, the earnest unsmiling air, the yellow-stained fingers, and watching her as she lit the next cigarette from the stub of the last, I wondered what they had in common. Perhaps a quality, rare in human beings, to make you feel full of latent capacities, waiting only the right touch to be released. Perhaps nothing.

She had run through her pack of cigarettes and the stubs floated now in a half-shredded sodden mass at the bottom of her cup. She stood up abruptly and said, "We'll talk some more another time, Malcolm." "O.K.," I said, a little startled by the suddenness with which the interview was ended.

We talked some more the next week and almost every week thereafter, following the unit meeting, sometimes alone, often with other unit members present. She exercised a powerful attraction for me. I felt a burning need to tell her about my contacts with the other people on the project, and about my reading, to which I now addressed myself seriously. I wanted her comments and suggestions

on everything. I sat near her at unit meetings, assisted her with literature distribution, and one Sunday morning went with her canvassing the neighborhood for *Daily Worker* subscriptions. We volunteered for assignments together and I frequently found myself designated for membership on the same unit committee with her. The most important thing in my life, it seemed to me, was to be near Inky and to have her approval.

One evening, some six months after I joined the unit, the members undertook the distribution of a circular advertising a Party meeting at Madison Square Garden. It was January; a cold, bone-chilling rain was falling, and of the ten members who had volunteered for the job only four showed up—Inky; Ben, a Party work-horse who had been in the Movement since 1905 or thereabouts; Ginny, the only pretty girl in the unit; and myself. The area assigned to us ran along the waterfront for ten blocks. The rain, the indifferent and frequently hostile reception we encountered in the bars, lunchrooms and tenement homes we visited, were quite dispiriting. Inky alone appeared unaffected. Indifference she attributed to lack of information, and in hostility she seemed to see only a more acute aspect of ignorance, which she undertook to correct, earnestly and patiently, so that I couldn't help wondering whether the acceptance of the circular and the verbal assurance given her that the meeting would be attended was not frequently a recognition that it was the only way to get rid of us.

Ben and Ginny were not as successful in disposing of their circulars, and we returned to Inky's place to leave the surplus in her care. Inky lived within walking distance, in a small loft building whose space had been converted into apartments, two to a floor. The door to her apartment opened on a long narrow dimly-lit corridor. We edged our way past stacks of old issues of the *Times*, the *Daily Worker*, the *New Masses* and Party literature, and entered the living-room, a large somewhat bare room, drably painted. Inky went into the kitchen and started coffee.

We were too tired to talk, and sat in our coats sipping coffee and taking reassurance from Inky that the distribution had been a success.

My feet had been wet all evening because my shoes were open at the seams and I began to sneeze. "You must not do that!" said Inky a little sharply, but I continued to sneeze. My nose ran. Inky brought me a box of tissue and made me take off my coat and shoes. She got a large pan of hot water and over my protests insisted that I soak my feet in it. Then she put a hand to my forehead and told me I was running a temperature.

"You had better get into bed," she said. Her entire manner had changed. She wore a look of intense solicitude and with Ginny's help made up one of the two studio couches in the room and got

me under the blanket. "You're fussing too much," I kept muttering, but I found the attention enjoyable, and when Ben and Ginny left it was pleasant, despite my discomfort, to have Inky sit on a stool near me and to hear her scold me for having gone out that evening with leaking shoes and without rubbers.

"It is important for a comrade to keep in good health," she said. "He has too much to do to waste time being sick."

That tickled me and I laughed, bringing on a fresh outburst of sneezing. "I've never been much on good health," I said, finally, blowing my nose. "I'm wearing all the shoes I own, and I haven't felt rich enough to buy a pair of rubbers since I left home."

She regarded me with a severe look. "You are a bad comrade," she observed. She bent close to examine my face. "And what is that scar there?" She demanded. "What kind of foolishness was that?"

I felt my jaw. "There?" I asked. "Yes, right there," she said. "Oh, that! I had an accident." "What did you do?" "I didn't do anything. I had a blowout. Car left the road and went down the hill." It had happened so long ago I had lost interest in the subject. "My God!" Inky exclaimed. "And all that happened was this cut on your face?" "I broke a leg and fractured some ribs and stayed in the hospital a couple of months. A small hospital, back in the hills there. They treated me, fine. I'm O.K. now. My wife and baby were with me. They were killed." I hadn't intended to mention it but it slipped out.

"You poor kid." Inky rested a large dry meaty hand on my forehead.

"I never think about it," I said truthfully. "It happened a long time ago, in '30."

"Still and all," she said. The corners of her mouth had turned down and she wore an almost tragic countenance. "Wife and child." Her voice trailed away. Was she thinking about Joe, I wondered. "No point making more about it than it was," I said. "Pearly Mae (what a ridiculous name I now thought—though at the time I considered it pretty) and I had been married only a short time, and the baby was small, only three months." It all struck me as quite remote. "And the whole thing happened so quickly." I recalled the shock and the grief, but again I found it hard to recapture the emotion. "On a mountain in West Virginia. No fence or cable to keep the car from leaving the road. One of those meaningless accidents." The subject was depressing. "Now in Russia, I suppose, they would have had a cable," I said, to tease her.

Inky frowned. "Don't joke, comrade," she said. But I had given her an angle. "And don't say that accident was meaningless. Unless you mean that life under capitalism is meaningless. No, Malcolm, it does mean something, that accident. That life here is

cheap. A worker's life, I mean. Think of the development of technology in this country. What does it go into? Making more money for the bosses. But developing a tire that won't blow out, or putting a fence on a dangerous road—no, there's no money in that."

I hadn't thought of it that way. I considered the moral a trifle strained, but it touched me to have Inky find social significance in the accident. "Maybe you're right," I said, closing my eyes. I was tired.

"I shouldn't keep you up!" she exclaimed, full of remorse. "Here, I'll make you some hot lemonade and you go to sleep."

I had dozed off when she reappeared with the lemonade. I didn't want it but to please her sat up, drank the glass she offered me, then dropped under the blanket again. Inky switched off the light. I heard her moving about, straightening things out, go to the bathroom, where she remained for several minutes, then retire for the night in one of the two bedrooms off the corridor.

I felt quite feverish the following morning and stayed in bed. Inky put wet compresses on my forehead and phoned for her lodge doctor, who appeared in the afternoon. "You have a cold," said the doctor, a faded tired-looking elderly man. "There's nothing I can do for you but to tell you to stay in bed." But after he had gone Inky insisted that I gargle every hour with scalding hot water, take two aspirins every four hours, and hot lemonade on a two hour schedule. I was uncomfortable and dozed a good part of the day. Inky was in and out of the apartment. Every time she left she reassured me she would be back soon. I knew she had a job to go to and perhaps other responsibilities, and the trouble she took looking after my needs worried me. At the same time I listened for her footsteps when she was gone, and her energetic manner when in the house gave me a very pleasant feeling.

On the third day my temperature dropped to normal. I was no longer sneezing but had developed a cough. Inky wanted me to remain another day, but I decided I had inconvenienced her long enough and over her protests went home that afternoon.

I had acquired a certain affection for her. To my perplexity and disappointment, however, she showed little interest in me when I saw her at the unit meeting. "You are better, Malcolm?" she inquired, and when I replied, "Yes," she said, "Good," and dropped the subject.

The next occasion I had to be at Inky's place was the time we gave the Cause Party, later that spring. Such affairs were common in those days as a painless device to raise money—for the Party, for the relief of Spanish refugees, for the Scottsboro Boys, for the thousand and one committees that flourished in the late Thirties like weeds. An admission fee of 25 or 50 cents was charged, and in addition you paid for sandwiches and drinks and 10 cents for the

use of the john. You could be out a day's wages by the end of the evening, but you had a good time.

Inside the apartment, decorated with red crepe paper and colorful Spanish posters, I found the usual activities going on. There was a small group around the phonograph playing Red Army Chorus songs, Southern mountain ballads, Negro spirituals and cowboy songs. At the other end of the room a girl in blue jeans and a red checked man's shirt was picking out a labor union song on a guitar, a little uncertainly. She had a group of admirers on the floor around her who knew enough lines to encourage her to continue but not enough to render an entire verse, and she looked unhappy. An artist was drawing likenesses for 35 cents, and cigarettes could be bought from Celia the Cigarette Girl, who was dressed in tights and a short flouncy skirt and carried a tray suspended from her neck by a ribbon. There was a good deal of drinking going on, and among the younger people present there was ardent love-making in the corners and in the poorly-lit corridor through which you had to pass to get to the living-room.

Inky was busy in the kitchen making sandwiches and fixing bowls of ice for the drinks. Empty bottles of coke, ginger-ale, pop, gin, rum, and whiskey blends cluttered up the sink counter surface, and on the floor there were large shopping bags crammed full of dirty paper plates, wooden spoons and forks. I offered to help and Inky put me to work collecting empty glasses and paper plates and cups.

Ginny helped me. She usually had a pale washed-out appearance, but this evening her eyes were bright and her color was high. She was wearing a jumper, which made her look a little like a school-girl, an effect heightened by the two braids into which she had plaited her dirty-blond hair and which bobbed up and down her back as she moved about. Every time I saw her small white ears, from which the hair had been pulled back severely, I wanted to reach out and touch them. I had a strong urge, too, to play with the shoulder straps of her jumper.

She must have felt a similar attraction towards me, because when we sat down to have a drink together she couldn't keep her hand off my arm. She tinkled with little bells of laughter at everything I said, leaning towards me, her lips warm and parted, the light glancing off her forehead and high cheekbones and drawing sparks from the tawny crystals in her hazel eyes. I found it hard to resist kissing her. She kissed back, putting her arms around my neck. In the fashion of such parties we paid no attention to the others in the room and they ignored us.

We wanted more of each other and slipped into a bedroom. We had both been married (Ginny had separated from her husband earlier that year) and wasted little time in preliminaries. But I

hadn't counted on Inky. I had Ginny only half undressed and was myself fully clothed when she opened the door and said, "Shame, comrades."

We scrambled off the bed. Ginny stood with her back to the door, in shadow, fumbling with her dress. I put myself between her and the grim squat figure of Inky and said, "This isn't a nice thing to do."

"Listen to him!" she cried. "A nice thing! What kind of place do you think this is? I won't have it."

"Don't take it so hard," I said. I hated her at this point, and wanted to get out of the room as quickly as possible, but I also wanted to give Ginny time to straighten up. "We were just fooling around a little."

"In bed? No, comrade, you can't fool me." She shook her head. "Oh, this is so unclean. It gives the Party such a bad reputation. You should set an example to others. Cheap affairs like this—. No, Comrade Brown, Comrade Preston (she was using our Party names), it is not good. Lenin said he wouldn't drink water out of a dirty glass. He was talking precisely about this."

"Oh nuts," I said, but under my breath, because I was afraid of Inky, and because despite my hostility toward her I still wanted her approval.

Ginny had arranged herself by this time and I felt free to return to the living-room. The party was in high gear. I sank into a low deep chair and tried to read a book, but it was too noisy. The place suddenly palled on me. I went to the kitchen and said to Inky, "I'm sorry for what happened." She looked at me with sad eyes. "Sorry," she repeated. "Sorry is sorry." Then, suspecting perhaps that I may not have grasped her meaning, she added, "Well, good, Malcolm. I'm glad you're sorry." Part of me felt better, but another was disgusted with my supine behavior.

Inky was about to say more then checked herself. "Your tie is crooked. Sit down." I sat myself at the kitchen table and she tightened the knot of my tie and pushed it into position. I noticed again, as I had on other occasions when close to her, that her dress, made of a cheap rayon, fitted her awkwardly, was the wrong color for her, and smelled as though it hadn't been to the cleaners in a long time. Dandruff powdered her shoulders. Inky never gave a damn about her appearance and I hadn't either, until now, when I was fresh from Ginny's arms.

Her hands lingered at my tie. I was afraid of what she might do next and rose quickly to my feet. "Thank you," I said, as formally as I could and fled.

I sought out Ginny. She was standing in front of a mirror fixing her hair and I said to her, "Supposing I take you home, kiddo." She threw me a pleased smile. "Did you get the Madame's permis-

sion?" That sounded a little like *lese-majesty*, but I liked her for saying it.

Ginny lived in the Village, over a mile from Inky's place. The night air was pleasant and we were in high spirits, so we decided to walk. I kept thinking how attractive Ginny was and wondered why I hadn't noticed it earlier. When we got to her house she asked me in, and although it was late I agreed, intending to stay only a minute, but as it turned out I spent the rest of the night there.

Things went badly for Inky that year, 1939. For one thing, the Republican cause in Spain went down to final defeat. For another, there was the Nazi-Soviet pact, which burst on all of us like a clap of thunder. Then the war came, the Phony War phase, after the quick conquest of Poland, when Britain and France were in a state of hostilities with Germany but no fighting was in progress. The Soviet Union was neutral and the Party line was to defend that neutrality and to blame the war on the imperialists in France and England, and overnight the People's Front and all the mental furniture that went with it were tossed out the window. Inky faithfully expounded the new Party line, but the fire was somehow out of her exposition, and some of us listened with only one ear, and thought of Joe and wondered what revisions she had made in her memories of him. She lost her job; some said because of her politics; others said no, it was just one of those things. She had quite a time getting another, and in the meantime the lack of one showed in a certain edginess in her voice which had never been there before.

I didn't follow this too closely because things were happening to me, too. I got myself a job with a firm of architects, my first regular full-time job in about eight years, and enrolled that fall in an evening course in design. Ginny and I had become lovers, and I slept several nights a week at her place and spent my weekends with her. I came late to unit meetings because of my class at Columbia that same evening of the week. I avoided unit assignments, and I think I inspired Ginny to do the same.

The new job, my renewed interest in a career, and the changing political climate had jarred loose the frame in which Party membership and the round of Party activities seemed natural, and I had begun, although I didn't know it at the time, a slow process of mental disengagement from the world of radical politics. I was aware only of a certain restlessness in my Party connection, but old habits lingered, including those of attending unit meetings, buying Party literature and the *Daily Worker*. The more my political convictions lost their firmness, and my boredom with the trivia of meeting routines mounted, the keener became my sense of guilt at my slackness and indifference. I made myself as inconspicuous as possible at unit meetings, avoiding above all any contact with Inky, whose eyes I thought at the time followed me everywhere.

And then one Tuesday evening, as our meeting was breaking up—it had been rather a depressing one because a number of members had fallen down on their assignments—she came over to where I stood and asked me to have coffee with her. Well, here it comes, I thought to myself, resigned. I caught Ginny's eye and signalled I would see her later.

In the cafeteria Inky said nothing through the first cup of coffee, throwing me an occasional opaque look. For all her apparent difficulties she had put on weight and her dress looked tight and out of shape at the shoulders and armpits.

"Well, now," she finally began, "what did you think of the meeting?"

I was thrown off guard. I had been expecting a dressing down, not a request for an opinion.

"It was all right," I said noncommittally.

"It was terrible."

She paused to let this severe judgment sink in.

"Well, some days you can't make a nickel," I said lightly.

She frowned. "I wish you wouldn't talk that way, Malcolm. That's cheap." I felt ashamed. "Terrible," she repeated. The smoke poured out of her nostrils, and her fierce black eyebrows drew together. "The comrades are falling down. They're lazy and don't care. Shaking the finger won't help. We will have to make a few examples. Expulsion."

She was silent again. I saw heads roll, mine among them. I was quite ready for it. But I hadn't realized until then that I was not the only sinner. Expulsion was after all the supreme penalty in the Party's arsenal of disciplines, comparable in its severity only to the rite of excommunication in the Catholic Church. To learn that morale in the unit had become so slack that such an understanding, forgiving, father-confessor type as Inky was forced to talk in terms of expulsion, was an eye-opener. Curiously enough it made me secretly glad, because I felt now that I had company in my back-sliding.

"Why do you always come late to meetings?" asked Inky abruptly.

She had lulled me into thinking she would talk generalities, and once again I was thrown off balance.

"I'm taking a class Tuesdays from six to eight," I said.

"Why does it have to be on *Tuesday*?"

"That's the only night this particular course is offered."

"And it's more important than the Party?"

Her eyes glowered balefully, but there was sadness in her voice, too.

"Of course not," I said defensively. I could have kicked myself. Here was my chance to be honest with her, and I had flunked it.

"But it's in my own field, architecture, and I've decided to complete the credits I need for my degree. I've put it off long enough."

She regarded me mournfully. "Credits, degrees," she murmured. Another pause. "When the world is about to go up in flames."

The enormity of it crushed me. I couldn't think of what to say.

"Do you read the paper, Malcolm?" I nodded. "Then you know what I'm talking about. This stupid, useless war in Europe. And all those people who want to drag us in to help the imperialists in England and France . . ."

She went on like this for a while. I began to have hopes she was through with me, but in the middle of the dull-edged *Daily Worker* phrases, to which I had become inured, I felt again the sharp thrust of a personal reference.

"Why didn't you speak up when the comrades in the union were fighting for the resolution?"

She was referring to a resolution denouncing the War-Mongers and calling for U.S. neutrality, which the W.P.A. union local had adopted that fall.

"I'm not a member of that union now," I said. "I don't work for W.P.A. any more."

"You were still a member when they had that vote on affiliation and you voted for the A.F. of L.," she went on, changing the subject, or changing the illustration, really, because the subject was still the same, my heresies. I was supposed to have voted for C.I.O. affiliation in accordance with the Communist Party caucus decision.

I was beginning to be annoyed and felt a desire to hurt her.

"What you fixin' to do?" I asked in my best Tennessee inflection, knowing this would make her mad.

"Don't give me that pseudo-Negro talk, Malcolm. When you do that it hurts me, here—" and she pointed to her bosom. I said nothing, and perhaps in retaliation she went on to say, "When I hear you talk like that I wonder if the Party ever taught you anything. About Negroes." She opened her eyes. "You never did understand the Party's position on the Black Belt."

She was quite right, of course. I had never been able to assimilate that indigestible lump of Party doctrine in the Thirties—a Black Republic in the South.

"It doesn't matter now," she said. "What is important is what we have to do today. And for that we need strong comrades, with a correct point of view, who can give leadership. You can do it, Malcolm, if you put your mind to it."

She gave me a long hard look, so hard that I dropped my eyes.

"You did it once." That was news to me. "But lately—I don't know." She pulled hard on her cigarette. "I don't think that Comrade Brown is a good influence on you."

The reference was to Ginny. So now it was out. She had come to the point. My heart jumped, in anger, in guilt. "How can you say a thing like that!" I cried. "She's a good Party member. You know that."

"She does just enough to get by," said Inky, slowly. A pause. "Ah, Malcolm, she is not the girl for you. Can't you see how shallow she is? How can you stoop—" She cut herself short, as though she felt she had gotten too personal. "There are Party members," she went on, generalizing, "who joined the Party when it was the fashionable thing to do in some circles. And who are dropping out now. You'll see. They can't take it when it gets tough. Summer soldiers. I don't care. Let them go. We'll be better off without them. Lenin said the Party is the hard core of the Revolution, not a mass party." There was a harshness in her voice, new and strange to me. Where was the Inky who would spend hours patiently expounding the Party line to the skeptical, disputatious school teacher, and to the noncomprehending building porter, the Inky to whom every person had equal worth? "What do you want with a person like that?" She was back to Ginny again.

"That's my business," I said stiffly.

"Your business," she repeated dully. "No, that's childish." She stopped to consider this. "Sometimes I feel so old. Do you know that I am thirty years old? Thirty."

She said it as though she had said seventy. I looked at her in astonishment. I had thought her at least thirty-five, perhaps even forty. But thirty? Why, that was my own age! And I felt young and full of expectation.

"I have lived through so much," said Inky. "Personal things. Love. At one time love seemed so important. And personal happiness. I used to think the most important thing was personal happiness. Imagine. That kind of life can be very unhappy, when you wake up one day and find you can't have what you think you need for personal happiness. Or you have it and lose it. Because it's not something you can hold on to. Not for very long, anyway. You get hurt and stay hurt, for life. Bad." She lit another cigarette. "That's why I'm afraid for you. You're beginning to think about your personal life too much. And when you do that, it's a bad sign for what comes later."

"What do you mean?" I asked, puzzled.

"Do you know when I stopped being unhappy? When I became active in the Party and forgot all about myself. When I gave myself, all of myself, to the Revolution. That was the most important

decision I ever made in my life. To give yourself to the Party, to live only for the Revolution, that is true happiness."

I wondered. She did not look to me like the embodiment of happiness. She had been disappointed in me—and in how many others? Surely some of these disappointments must have cost her grief, for she tended to place too much faith in others. Why, for all her wonderful qualities did she lack judgment about people? Was it not self-delusion to have put faith in me, in the others? Or to have given them love, her odd kind of love?

"Why didn't you go all the way?" I asked. I was curious. Despite her declarations of total surrender to the Cause, she had not taken the ultimate step of a job as a full-time paid Party worker.

She made an impatient gesture. "Someone like me? A Party functionary? No, I'm not good enough. I don't have the experience. Or the education."

I listened skeptically. When I compared what she had to offer in devotion, courage and leadership with the very pedestrian qualities of some of the paid Party workers I had known, I couldn't but feel that she was not telling me the entire story. What was it? Some secret reservation she harbored? Real honest to God humility?

"Where you belong, that's a question each person has to decide for himself," she said. "This is where I belong, working with the comrades in the unit. That's where you belong, too. Give it some thought, Malcolm."

"I will," I said falsely. I felt compelled to add, "I don't think it will make any difference in my wanting to get my degree. Or in my personal friendships." I hesitated at the last, but felt I owed her that scrap of honesty.

"But you will think about it," she said, almost pleadingly, I thought.

"Yes," I said. I could no longer restrain my impatience. I got up. "You'll have to excuse me. I promised to meet someone after the meeting."

I suspected she knew whom I was going to meet because as she nodded good-bye to me the corners of her small, tight mouth turned down. I felt pity for her, but only for a moment. For as soon as I reached the sidewalk outside and sensed all about me the nervous pulsing energy of an October night in the city so full of promise, I felt a giddy racing excitement and freedom and anticipation of joy all in one, and I could hardly walk away from the cafeteria fast enough.



David Young

Sonnet: The Prodigal

Tell him of bones risen, restless, riven
From sleep to dare the harsh air, from the loam
Urged by a sick spirit, spirit to no sleep given,
Trying to rise, tells tales to itself of home.
Warn him of wars within, of last rest lost
Among the twisting roots in the still soil, so
The time-long night goes, the worn soul tossed
Awake yet by the thought of a place to go
And a word all often tendered in the dark
Of something as far and further gone than the geese
In the lost sky. How can the heart now hark
Back to its birth and the leaked peace
Of the first years? Ah, what's the worth
Of exile tears wetting an alien earth?

DAVID YOUNG, a resident of Omaha, Nebraska, is presently a graduate student in English at Yale University. As an undergraduate at Carleton College, he published some of his work in the Carleton literary magazine, *Manuscript*, which he edited.

In Review

Twelve Original Essays on Great American Novels, ed. by Charles Shapiro. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1958. \$5.00. The reviewer is editor of the *Arizona Quarterly*.

The Wayne State University Press is to be congratulated for having assembled twelve genuinely original essays on as many American novels and novelists. Too often of late such collections have gathered together introductions reprinted from one or another of the paperback series or articles previously published in some of the literary and scholarly magazines. Since the editor has wisely imposed no restrictions of treatment upon his contributors, there is naturally a wide variety of approach and treatment in these papers. One feels, however, that such a result is highly suitable, not only to show the diversity of contemporary critical methods but more importantly, the diversity of the American novel itself.

This diversity is well displayed by the chronological range, from David Brion Davis's "The Deerslayer, A Democratic Knight of the Wilderness" to Alfred Kazin's "The Stillness of *Light in August*." For Davis to proclaim that "Leatherstocking stands as not only the greatest, but as the prototype, of American fictional heroes" may seem at first glance to be more than a little extreme, but he makes his case very substantially. On the other hand, to hold that the "six days of action [in *The Deerslayer*]" seem to echo the cycle of creation is certainly to impute to Cooper a kind of latent symbolism he is unlikely to have had in mind. Likewise, some of the lesser characters are made to bear a symbolic freight too heavy for their relatively undifferentiated natures. Nevertheless, in his insistence upon the centrality of the Deerslayer type, the "figure combining deadly skills with social innocence," in American fiction, Davis has made a valuable contribution. Frankly, before

reading this essay, it would not have occurred to me that Deerslayer and Christopher Newman were brothers under the skin. And so are many others.

Malcolm Cowley ("Five Acts of *The Scarlet Letter*") rightly lets us see that Hawthorne in his greatest novel used the same skills that Poe had praised in his reviews of the short stories: "*The Scarlet Letter* was the first novel in English—perhaps in any language—that had the unity of effect and the strict economy of means of a perfect tale." After indicating the germ of the story in "Endicott and the Red Cross" and its development in various notebook entries, Cowley shows the brilliant manner in which Hawthorne solved his technical problems. It is here that the title of the essay comes in. Others have suggested the importance of scene—and scenes—in *The Scarlet Letter*, but it has remained for Mr. Cowley to tell us that it "can be read, and gains a new dimension from being read, as a Racinian drama of dark necessity." Indeed, following his careful analysis of the novel in dramatic terms—Mr. Cowley finds five acts with eight scenes in its pages—we are told of Hawthorne, "It is not too much to say that he had recaptured, for his New England, the essence of Greek tragedy."

Herbert Gold has contributed a fine paper on "*Winesburg, Ohio*: The Purity and Cunning of Sherwood Anderson." The two aspects of the title are developed in this fashion: "He is one of the purest, most intense poets of loneliness—the loneliness of being an individual and of being buffeted in the current, the loneliness of isolation and that of being swallowed." On the other hand, says Mr. Gold, "He was not a pure man; he had a kind of farmer cunning." Yet despite this dichotomy, or perhaps because of it, Anderson "has helped to create the image we have of ourselves as Americans."

Charles Shapiro, the editor of the volume, writes on Theodore Dreiser

under the title of "*Jennie Gerhardt: The American Family and the American Dream*." Mr. Shapiro rightly begins with an attack on the position, frequently observed among critics, that Dreiser had no consciousness of craft and stumbled upon whatever success he attained. As Mr. Shapiro points out, "bad sentences, stretched end to end, will never equal a good book." As *Sister Carrie* showed how powerfully and horribly the middle-class American success dream could miscarry for an individual, so *Jennie Gerhardt* is a demonstration of "the effects of American materialism on the American family." Mr. Shapiro's close examination of the novel provides the proofs for his thesis and also clearly demonstrates Dreiser's sense of design.

John W. Aldridge in "The Life of Gatsby" deals with another and later example of one aspect of the American dream. As Aldridge remarks in closing his paper, Gatsby "is a major figure in the legend created by the complex fate of being American." Through a detailed analysis of *The Great Gatsby* Mr. Aldridge provides us with the best description to date of the real and careful structure of that novel. Appropriately, he shows how much an improvement in form *Gatsby* is over *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and the Damned* and how this improvement in form is related to the development of Fitzgerald's whole philosophic position toward his material and his characters.

Mark Spilka, on *The Sun Also Rises*, and Alfred Kazin, on *Light in August*, contribute good, sound articles which yet do not seem to add greatly to the literature on Hemingway and Faulkner. Granville Hicks contributes a singularly old-fashioned sort of discursive and round-about paper on "A Re-Reading of *Moby Dick*." Actually Richard Chase, who of course, is a Melvillean of note, adds more by a few oblique remarks in his essay on *The Ambassadors* to at least one reader's appreciation of *Moby Dick*. George P. Elliott's "Wonder for *Huckleberry Finn*" seems never quite to make up its mind as to whether it will follow the Van Wyck Brooks or Bernard De Voto school of thought

about Mark Twain. Bernard Weisberger deals effectively with *The Red Badge of Courage* and one can hope that Walter B. Rideout's discriminating analysis will help to bring to Edith Wharton and *The House of Mirth* an attention from present-day readers and critics long overdue.

Albert F. Gegenheimer

The Ironie German; a Study of Thomas Mann, by Erich Heller. Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1958. \$6.00. The reviewer teaches in the University of North Carolina.

The author of this critical study sees Thomas Mann as the heir to what he calls the central tradition of German literature—a conservative romantic tradition as opposed to the rootless searching for a new literary coherence by such writers as Musil, Rilke, and Kafka. As such, Mann is to be understood not only as the writer of a great corpus of contemporary works, but also as the latest, and perhaps last, major figure in a long literary tradition. Mr. Heller assigns Mann his place in that tradition by making clear his intellectual debt to Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner, and other figures, and to the late nineteenth-century German middle-class. He does this by examining the motivations of the major characters in Mann's fiction in the light of these men's ideas and the pressures of the business interests of that day.

When he comes to interpret Mann's writings, the reason for the author's choice of title is clear. As Mr. Heller sees him, Mann was, indeed, *the Ironie German*. Irony, he says, is the theme that pervades all of Mann's work. The nature of this irony is "... the apotheosis of all previous ironies. . . . In fact, all the heroes of Thomas Mann, from Thomas Buddenbrook to Hans Castorp, are men on whom the Spirit has visited a generous measure of the deeply ironical problems he has created in his perplexed and perplexing dealings with the Soul. . . . Not the least of these problems

arises from the archetypal Buddenbrooks situation: the question of the true relationship between the forms which, as if for ever, the Soul has begotten in the world, and the goal which, try as he may, the spirit is not allowed to forget." Mr. Heller labors to show that this quality of irony is a major factor in Mann's plots, in his characters, and often in his own life. (The above quotation is, incidentally, fairly typical of Mr. Heller's muddy prose.)

The author further views Mann's works as a unit the whole of which at every point is intimately tied into his personal life. The two, he says, are inseparable and must be considered in their development together. "There is not only the unmistakable idiom, the manner of speech, tone and gesture, identifiable in every line, but also the dominant position of identical themes in volume after volume." Thomas Mann's identical themes were not simply ideas he once had and to which thereafter he clung. They were, insists Mr. Heller, the articulate form of a mind which grew with and within their ever subtler and more complex variations. This is why almost every successive work not only added to the illumination of the previous ones, but revealed them as actually bigger than they seemed when they first appeared; and for the inevitability of those themes there can hardly be surer evidence than their career, which began in the shadow of *Buddenbrook's* pessimism, culminated in the myth and tragedy of the Joseph novels and *The Magic Mountain* and ended with the blessings of the comic muse on *Felix Krull*. Thus, Mr. Heller would have us examine Mann's works both historically and systematically.

Of particular interest to those who know Mann in English translation is the lengthy discussion that Mr. Heller gives to *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (*Meditations of a Non-Political Man*), which was written in 1918 and is Mann's only major work that has not been put into English. Mr. Heller says of it that it was a source book of Mann's entire later creative life, a reser-



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voir from which he was to draw, often to the point of literal quotation, for such works as *The Magic Mountain*, *Lotte in Weimar* and even the *Felix Krull*. Moreover, it is an invaluable record of a certain stage of European intellectual history, containing, for example, a citation of George Lukacs, at that time an aesthetic philosopher, later to become a Marxist interpreter of literature, still later a university professor in Communist Budapest, and finally one of the intellectual leaders in the 1956 Hungarian revolt against Moscow.

As a piece of criticism, *The Ironic German* represents an improvement over the same writer's collection of essays published last year under the title *The Disinherited Mind*. In the present book on Mann Mr. Heller presents several illuminating passages on language and structure and stresses the importance of these factors in a work of literature. Such considerations were completely lacking in his earlier book in which he was wholly occupied with the problem of ideas.

Mr. Heller's approach to literary criticism in general is not that of most twentieth century writers. His first concern is not to carefully accumulate and set out for the reader a body of evidence and then draw conclusions therefrom. Instead, he writes with a passion and interest in his subject that is reminiscent of some of the nineteenth-century critics. This propensity to state a creed rather than build a case is weakening to his argument. But Mr. Heller's judgments on German literary figures, as entangled and difficult to get at as they often may be, are, nonetheless, worth carefully sorting and weighing for they are the product of a scholarship made rich by a background of experience in twentieth-century central European life.

Jerah Johnson

The Idea of Freedom: A Dialectical Examination of the Conceptions of Freedom, by Mortimer J. Adler. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1958. \$7.50. The reviewer is at the University of North Carolina.

This monumental study is an effort to organize, classify and summarize the thinking of 2500 years of Western civilization on the idea of freedom. The work is not a history of ideas, as one might assume; there is no effort to trace the origin of the idea and its development from the Greeks through successive stages of thinking to the present. The historian of ideas, in fact, will probably be thoroughly offended by this method of approach and organization which, for example, lifts Marcus Aurelius completely out of social, economic and political context and places him down next to Spinoza in quite a different milieu. Strange bedfellows in strange beds, would say the historian. The carefully annotated study of the development of an idea in the classic style of a Lecky or a Bury is not to be looked for here. The work is not history.

Nor is it philosophy, in the accepted sense of the word, for no attempt is made to philosophize, to formulate some new philosophical concept or system. It is instead a description and comparison of existing ideas on the meaning of freedom.

If the study is not legitimate history and not legitimate philosophy, then is it totally illegitimate? Not at all. It is an impressive work of classification worthy indeed of the most grandiose ambitions of the 18th century *philosophe* for organizing knowledge. In Enlightened style the work was produced through the efforts of a group of research associates, the Institute for Philosophical Research and its Director, Mortimer J. Adler. Beginning his career in sharp opposition to the pragmatic views of John Dewey, his professor at Columbia College, Adler was associated during the years from 1929-1952 with President Robert Maynard Hutchins at the University of Chicago in the development of the "great books" idea in education. This idea was an open revolt against the traditional educational program of rigid academic requirements within narrow departmentalization. It proposed to give the student free rein to acquire, first, a solid foundation in



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the humanities through reading the original texts of certain "great books," before beginning study in any specialized field. This plan, in the idealist eyes of its proponents, would provide the student with a firm basis from which to think and to make moral decisions, and would avoid the pragmatic pitfall of mere acquisition of "useful" information.

From the Great Books Program at the University of Chicago which had been expanded over the years to include adult education as well as undergraduate courses, Hutchins and Adler edited and published, in 1952, the multi-volume set *Great Books of The Western World*. Adler's effort was the index, a two volume "Syntopicon" which broke down the "great books," 443 of them, into 102 "great ideas," with each idea painstakingly indexed and referenced to the books in which the idea occurred. Lesser ideas were classified under the appropriate great ones.

It is not surprising, from the nature of the "great books" labor, that Adler was led in 1952 to found the Institute for Philosophical Research with the stated aim of summarizing all of the wisdom of Western Civilization. And what more significant subject could the Institute have selected for its initial work than a study of the idea of freedom.

Adler sees in the thinking of the philosophers three distinct views of the nature of freedom. The first of these, the "freedom of self-realization," is the view that would most likely be expressed by the man on the street if you were to ask him (assuming of course that he is not enrolled in a "great books" program). Along with Hobbes, J. S. Mill, Pareto and Laski, he would say that freedom is the ability of the individual to carry out what he wishes as he thinks best. Freedom of self-realization is largely a circumstantial thing; and unfavorable external circumstances, whether personal restraints or social forces for conformity, must be considered limitations on freedom. Iron bars, to this group, do make a prison, and no doubt about it.

In the view of the second group, however, iron bars are of no consequence; in fact they will probably not even be noticed. This group states that man can acquire, through his will, a state of mind or character which is freedom; external circumstances, favorable or unfavorable, can make him neither free nor unfree. This large group, which includes such diverse thinkers as Plato, Epictetus, Aquinas and Freud, represents a view which Adler terms "the acquired freedom of self-perfection."

Beyond either the circumstantial or the acquired freedom is, for the third group, the question of why and how man wants what he wants and chooses what he chooses. Man possesses, they insist, a "natural freedom," an inherent self which can determine his purposes and desires, and which can choose between one motive and another. This freedom, variously termed "free will," "freedom of choice," "free judgment," or by Adler "freedom of self-determination" has been identified among others with Kant, James, Dewey, Sartre and Tillich.

Within the three major theories each lesser idea is meticulously classified. Adler goes to great length to explain the scientifically objective method employed in dealing with this mass of material (with each detailed category, no doubt, having its own set of IBM cards in the Institute's files). This approach leads to his insistence on an impartial point of view. Yet, at the start, some individual must have decided how the machines would be set to punch the cards. A scientific study of philosophy would appear to be as unbiased as "scientific history." In any such study presuppositions must always exist, and in this case there seems to be the impressive foundation of Platonic realism apparent both in the approach and the discussions.

Adler and his associates hope that this work of charting and clarifying man's idea of freedom may lead to a "progress" in philosophy comparable to that which has taken place in science. The broad aim is to bring philosophy to

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a maturation of functional service to mankind. It is curious, indeed paradoxical, to find such Platonism embarked on such a pragmatic venture as this.

John Hardin Best

TWO NEW POETRY MAGAZINES

Two of the most important poetry magazines in the United States, *The Beloit Poetry Journal* and *The New Orleans Poetry Journal*, have recently met with seemingly unsolvable problems, and there is a strong likelihood that both may be forced to suspend publication. On the tail of this disappointing report, however, comes news of the birth of two new magazines dealing with poetry: *Poetry Collector* and *Nomad*.

Poetry Collector, under the editorship of Ronald Voigt (Box 803, Lafayette, Ind.) is primarily an informational bulletin which attempts to provide a complete periodic listing of all books, magazines, pamphlets, recordings, etc. which are in any way concerned with poetry. In the words of its editor: "PC would like to be a clearing house for information relative to what's going on within the poetry world." The first issue, which appeared in October, carries, in addition to the listings of current books of and about poetry, a feature on possible approaches to marketing volumes of poetry. PC should prove to be of great value to the bookseller as well as the poetry buyer. Too much today is escaping the notice of both.

Nomad (Box 626, Culver City, Calif.) is a poetry magazine which hopes to act as sounding board for both new and established poets in their quest for new forms of expression. It is under the dual editorship of Donald Factor and Anthony Linick who expect the first issue to be available in January. That issue will carry work by Paul Raboff, Charles Bukowski, Thomas McGrath, and Curtis Zhan among others. *Nomad* has adopted no particular credo and is not a part of any "school" among poets; rather it emphasizes its readiness to accept work from all areas of contemporary expression.

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\$100.00 Short Story Award and \$50.00 Poetry Award

These cash prizes to be presented to the author of the short story and the author of the poem judged the best work published during the year, i.e., in any of the three issues of each volume. Recipients of the awards will be announced in the Summer issue. *Closing date of the final issue of the current volume is April 1.*

Manuscripts, with return addressed, stamped envelope attached, should be sent to Warren Heemann, Fiction Editor, or Arthur Lessing, Poetry Editor, THE CAROLINA QUARTERLY, P. O. Box 1117, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

1959

PUBLICATION

Olivant

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Olivant No. 4

LI SAO of Ch'u Yuan, a credible
prose trs. w/ Intro. & Notes by
Jerah Johnson (March) \$4.00
(Japan printed)

Olivant No. 5

SHAPE OF THE TANGO, a play and
poetic-prose collection by Vincent
Benedetto (June) \$3.00

Olivant No. 6

THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM. First
book of poems by John Silkin of
England. A re-release first published
1954 in London (Aug) \$3.00

Robert A. Wiggins

The Suitcase and the Mystic

The bus deposited Tom on Telegraph Avenue, and the driver by his nod directed him toward the University. Tom shifted his damnably heavy valise to his other hand and started walking. There really was no reason to go directly to the campus, since he could not register until the following morning. But he did need some place to stay, some place where he could park the cowhide suitcase he carried. It was awkward and old-fashioned, and embarrassed Tom by its scuffed appearance and its large dimensions. Its middle class respectability seemed a burden to him now, but before the evening ended he was to clutch its solid bulk gratefully as he fled to familiar reality.

He stood hesitating on the sidewalk and dimly recalled that somewhere among all the printed instructions sent him in the mail was mentioned a Housing Office. He turned into the drugstore nearby, sat down at the counter, and ordered coffee. It gave him something to do while he searched his pockets for the desired piece of paper. He felt ill at ease, a little lonely. He had thought of himself as moderately worldly in this day of television, movies, and magazines, but now he felt awkward, ashamed of his indecision. He was reassured by his image in the mirror behind the counter: calm exterior despite inward turmoil; hands and face browned by the valley sun—a cowboy tan it was called back home, for it extended no farther than neck and wrists.

On impulse he jumped up to secure a local paper and returned to look in the want-ads. The paper was no help. Few rooms were listed for rent, and the two or three addresses of course were strange to him. They might be miles from the University. He folded the paper.

"If you're looking for a job, that's no way to go about it. Never look in the want-ads. Establish connections," said a voice beside him. The speaker wore a turtle-neck sweater and a beret, and appeared to be in his thirties. "Pass the sugar." He ladled four heaping teaspoons into his coffee cup. "It's a nauseous mixture. Ruins the coffee. But it's the most economical way of getting calories.

ROBERT A. WIGGINS is an assistant professor of English at the University of California. He took his A.B. at the University of Maryland and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of California in Berkeley. In addition to scholarly articles in such journals as *American Literature*, he has recently published short stories in *Husk* and *Four Quarters*.

First you put in four spoonfuls. That's as sweet as I can stand it. That's a hundred calories. Then drink half the cup and fill it up with cream. That's a hundred more. Then add two spoonfuls. That makes two-hundred-and-fifty calories for a dime. Here I can repeat for a nickel refill—the waitress is the motherly type. That makes five hundred calories for fifteen cents. I like the irony of patronizing this place because they feature the reducer's lunch of tomato juice, Rye Krisp, tossed salad, and black coffee—ninety calories for ninety cents. It's ironic, and I like irony."

Tom stared open-mouthed. "Go on, take a good look," the man said and stood away from the counter for Tom to see all five foot-four of him from his sandal-clad feet to his beret-topped head. He resumed his seat. "I'm called the Mystic. It dates from when I used to say it was a mistake that I was born. They called me Mistake, but when I went into my Oriental bit, they shortened it to Mystic. Get it? It's better than William Jackson. More distinctive. I like being called the Mystic. It's ironic because I'm really a materialist—a lower materialist. I believe all things can be reduced to their lowest material necessity. Like eating. You can get all the calories you need in a day from four cups of my coffee. But not the vitamins. What are you called?"

"Tom. Tom Elliot."

"You're kidding. I like that. Shows imagination." Tom looked puzzled. The Mystic continued, "I believe you are serious. Oh, wonderful! I'll confound everyone in the future by telling them I knew Tom Eliot when he was a young man." Tom stared back in silence. The Mystic rattled on: "A nonliterate, eh? Oh, I do like coney-catching, and you appear to be a gull right down my alley. Do you know Elizabethan parlance?"

"What's that?" asked Tom.

"It's the mother tongue. The language of Shakespeare. English before it was corrupted. The parlance of poetry."

"We read *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* in high school."

"Fine. Then you understand. Not everyone appreciates the bard. You're not looking for a job, I take it. Your valise bespeaks a search for accommodations, and your demeanor that you are about to saunter in the Groves of Academe."

"I'm entering the University," Tom announced.

"I thought as much. And you're newly arrived."

"I just got in and took the bus straight here. I was looking for a room in the want-ads."

"A mistake. Just as much a mistake as looking for a job. The people who advertise rooms expect nonsmoking, antiseptic working-men. You wouldn't be happy. You need to be among congenial colleagues. You've got to make connections, and you just made a

connection. You come with me. I know just the place. Your problem is solved."

Tom allowed himself to be led away. "Hold on a minute." Back he went to retrieve his suitcase. Its worn respectability irked him now. "You know a rooming-house? Is it near here? It has to be close to the University."

"Think no more about it," the Mystic airily replied. "It's not far. I know just the place."

Tom walked in silence beside the shorter man. No one seemed to pay any attention to the Mystic's odd appearance. He was extremely talkative, but there really was nothing alarming in his behavior. Tom was willing to accept him for what he seemed—a rather bohemian character who offered friendly help. Besides, Tom felt confident of taking care of himself. He had never met anyone like the Mystic. His kind was remote from the denim-clad men of the ranch community Tom had left. His reading was not wide, but Tom imagined the Mystic to be the sort of arty bohemian he had occasionally met in fiction. The Mystic seemed a part of the whole new world of ideas that Tom expected the University to open to him.

A few blocks down the street they stopped at a deserted storefront. The Mystic pushed open the door into a small shop cluttered with old shelving, bits of broken plaster, and other debris. "This is going to be an art gallery," he announced. "Nelli is making it with a rich widow. She's already signed the lease, and any day now he'll talk her into having the place remodeled." He led the way across the shop. "We're living in back." He raised his voice to call, "Laura, I've brought a visitor!"

Behind the shop was a windowless room faintly illumined by a bare bulb suspended from the high ceiling. The room was sparsely and oddly furnished. A large table in the middle had been cut down to a height of only about a foot from the floor. Orange crates stacked along one wall contained a bewildering array of books and magazines. A pot simmered on a gas plate on a table in one corner. There were no other furnishings except a mimeograph machine on a small table to one side.

A curtain over a doorway leading to another room pushed aside, and in came a woman about the same age as the Mystic and considerably taller. Her dark hair was tied back into a long ponytail. She wore only a brassiere and a full black skirt.

"Laura, this is Elliott," the Mystic said, and to Tom, "This is Laura. Petrarch had his for inspiration, and I have mine. I picked her up whoring on North Beach ten years ago."

"He means he was whoring, not me. He likes to shock people. Believe it or not, we were married in church, and I was a virgin when

he married me. Where the hell is my sweater? Don't believe half what Bill tells you. He and his crowd of world-savers are one step this side of Napa State Hospital. I'm the only one around here who isn't neurotic. Have you seen anything of a black sweater?"

Tom blushed and stammered his greeting.

Laura paused in her search of the room. "Why, Bill, I do believe you've found an innocent. How quaint. Eve, do come and meet Elliot. I think he's a poet or something."

A younger woman entered from the other room. Her blond hair was braided in a tiara across her head; she wore a full skirt and a tightly fitting sweater, both dark purple. In her hand was a wad of black sweater. "Is this what you were looking for? It was on the floor." Tom could hardly take his eyes from her incredibly small waist. It gave her an air of fragility as if she might snap in two if not handled gently.

Eve observed his stare and said, "I do have a remarkably tiny waist, don't I? Less than twenty inches. It's the first thing men notice about me." Tom blushed again. "He's cute," Eve announced. "So you write poetry. I wouldn't have believed it." Tom denied that he did. "Oh, good. I don't like men who write poetry. That doesn't include you, Bill; but then you can't call that crap you write poetry."

"Eve is my most devoted admirer," blandly asserted the Mystic. Turning to Tom, he asked, "Have you got a five for the room deposit? I'll take care of it for you right away." Tom handed over the money and picked up his valise to follow. The Mystic stopped him: "Stay here. I'll only be a minute." Turning to the women, he ordered, "Take good care of Elliot; and remember he's a shy bourgeois gull, so don't frighten him."

Tom lowered his suitcase again. "Sit down," Laura invited, and, noticing his bewilderment at the absence of chairs, added, "We sit on the floor around the table. I'll make us some instant coffee." She brought out a German porcelain mocha pot with matching cups, incongruous with the drab surroundings.

Eve sat down opposite Tom with a flounce of her skirt that gave a generous view of her thigh. She said, "I do hope you don't have the usual middle-class breast fetish. Mine are small, but they're perfectly proportioned. I don't have to wear a bra." Tom hid his confusion by gulping his coffee. Back home a girl wouldn't say things like that. It wasn't that they were prudish; on dates they didn't object to smooching with a fellow they liked, but they just didn't talk about it. They weren't so free in their speech. Tom felt somehow emancipated by the discovery that a girl could talk freely about things.

At this moment an athletic young man bounced into the room from the shop. He was dressed in blue jeans, sweat shirt, and tennis

shoes. Laura introduced him as Nelli. Nelli did not offer to shake hands; he just grinned at Tom and said, "Hi. Has Eve been verbally tantalizing you? Don't let it get you; it's all talk and no action."

Eve cursed him half-heartedly for Tom's benefit, "Damn you and your bedroom ego! It may score with rich widows, but not with this every-inch-a-female. Quit flexing your muscles, and tell us what Lady Bountiful has decreed."

"There, there, Baby," he soothed, reaching down to pull her skirt lower over her knee and then patting her paternally on the hip. "You'll like what Daddy has to report. We're in business. We don't see the cash, but she'll pay the bills up to five hundred, and we have to open with a one-man show of my work."

Laura added, "Good. We can close the show the following day and then start featuring some real art."

Nelli turned to Tom. "My fan. Laura's bugged because I haven't tried to make her, the wife of my dearest friend. Not that she would give, but she's pee-ohed because I haven't tried. It wounds her ego." Turning to Eve, he dropped his playful tone and became businesslike. "We better finish getting out this issue before we tackle the art gallery. Has Bill got all the copy ready yet? The covers can be picked up at the printer's tomorrow. You can cut stencils in the morning, and we can get the whole job done in a day." To Tom he explained, "This is a little mag we publish. The name is THIS. Bill picked it out because it's an anagram for crap, which is mostly what we print. Only the contributors will buy copies, but everybody's happy. The writers pay for a little vanity, and we get some eating money. Our next project is to get out a mimeographed edition of *Fanny Hill*. It's pretty hot stuff, but literary. That Cleland could write; it's good eighteenth-century bawdry. I think I'll write a critical preface."

Tom was enjoying the novelty of all that Nelli was saying. It sounded bohemian and arty to him, but the allusions were mystifying. He did not know what a little mag was, nor an anagram; he had never hear of *Fanny Hill* and Cleland. These people did not act furtive, but he gathered that their activities would not bear close inspection. He suddenly grew cold with the realization that they might even be Communists. But they did not talk politics or economics—only art, literature and philosophy. Embarrassed at first by their frank language, he still had enjoyed the thrill of illicit pleasure; but now for the first time he felt uneasy at being in this company. The return of the Mystic allayed his misgivings for a time.

"Stoke the fires, woman; prepare the feast," ordered the Mystic. "The provider has provided provisions—horse-meat filet and a couple of jugs of Zinfandel." He explained his views on food while Laura and Eve prepared the meal. "People are killing themselves

eating. Not just the quantity, but the kinds of food. And worse. They tie themselves down economically to their bellies. Do you realize the average American family spends nearly half its income on food? The four of us spend less than five dollars a week on food and eat well. The only things we buy are meat—horse meat or lamb breast—salt, brewer's yeast, and molasses. The rest we requisition. Twice a week Nelli and I scavenge the markets ahead of the garbage trucks for beet tops, celery, carrots, onion tops; you'd be surprised what they throw away. Americans waste enough vitamins in a year to supply the whole starving world."

Motioning for Tom to start eating, he continued his harangue. "Once a month we go down to the docks in Oakland and find a ship carrying a cargo of grain. We always bring back a sack of wheat or barley or beans for nothing. Sailors are generous. All it takes is a couple of lewd photographs to trade. We grind our own wheat on a Mexican stone. Natural foods. That's what we eat. None of your packaged, processed pap."

Tom had never seen such a meal. There was a pot of beans flavored with molasses, a savory stew of salted boiled greens—beet tops, celery, onion tops, and herbs. The main dish was thinly sliced horse-meat filets seared briefly on both sides and placed on a small trencher of whole-wheat cake. For dessert there were more of the tortilla-like cakes with molasses dribbled on them. Everyone washed down the food with tumblers of red wine.

Tom enjoyed the meal. The wine and talk made him giddy, but he was elated—as though invisible bonds had been broken. Here were people who flouted convention with impunity. They were free. This was what he had dreamed college would be like—people talking vitally about things that mattered, instead of the price of hay.

After dinner they sat around drinking more wine and talking. The hour grew very late, and Tom wondered about getting into his room, but the Mystic told him not to worry. The evening was young, and there was plenty of wine yet. At one point the conversation turned upon Tom. He confessed that he had in mind majoring in Agricultural Economics. There were good opportunities for a career with such a background. He hoped to make many contacts in college that might later prove useful. He wasn't sure yet, but he might find time to go out for track. He had been good in high school, and the freshman coach had written him a personal letter. The others were amused, and Tom felt foolish. He tried to get to his feet, but discovered he had drunk too much wine. He sat down again to wait for his head to clear.

The talk went on, and Tom listened. At times it seemed they were all trying to talk at once, and their voices rose. Talk, talk, talk! They seemed never to tire of talking. Tom understood very little of

it, but it all sounded exciting. He was dimly aware of others drifting in and out without introductions. The Mystic appeared to hold a continuous open house.

At one point Tom made out the Mystic's voice raised in anger: "Damn it, Nelli, I said no!"

And then Nelli, "But he's got to be initiated sometime."

"Not while he's drunk," said the Mystic. "He has to know what he's doing."

There was a momentary clearing in the fog of Tom's mind. They must be talking about him! And suddenly the exciting bohemian atmosphere took on a sinister hue. Tom struggled against fumes clouding his mind, and the effort made him sick. He rose shakily to his feet. "Where's the bathroom?" he asked.

Eve rose and, taking him by the hand, led him out through the darkened room in the rear. "Just follow me. We have to go outdoors and then up the stairs. It's at the back end of the loft." Tom followed her through the dark. He hoped he would not be sick before he got there. Eve opened a door upon the smell of ancient plumbing. Tom's stomach churned. A light suspended from the ceiling sprang on harshly to reveal a basin and a stool without a seat and a pull chain reaching up to a tank high on the wall overhead.

Eve was chatting away: "Now I can show you my waist. I've been dying to show you my waist. You go ahead and make water. It won't bother me. I'll show you my back first before giving you the full effect from the front." She turned, whipped her sweater over her head, unfastened her skirt and let it fall about her feet and stood only in a pair of panties. "You must promise not to touch." She turned her head over her shoulder to speak to him. "Notice the contrast of the waist between the hips and the shoulders. Striking, isn't it. Now notice when I turn around and take a deep breath—"

"Please, please," Tom moaned and stretched his hand out in a gesture to stop her. He had vaguely in mind to ask her please to leave so he could be sick alone, but she misunderstood.

"Take your filthy hands off me," she shrieked. Tom reeled over to the basin and retched. Eve was grumbling something, but Tom did not comprehend. Neither did he observe her dressing slowly, smoothing her sweater tightly around the waist to accentuate her trim midriff. Tom groaned and moaned with his eyes closed. With his stomach empty he did not feel so desperately sick, but he still could not bring himself to open his eyes or turn from the basin.

Eve spoke, "I'm sorry for what I said. I didn't understand." Gratefully Tom felt a cold, wet rag pressed to his forehead. "Unbutton your shirt. I don't want to get it wet." She started removing his shirt and then squealed, "Oh, you're so white underneath. So beautifully white, and not hairy. I hate hairy men!"

Horried, Tom pulled his shirt about him. "We must get back," he said; "we'll be missed." Eve laughed. Tom staggered out of the room and down the stairs, Eve's laughter trailing behind him. He looked for a way to escape and then remembered his suitcase—he could not leave it behind. He stumbled through the back door and across the dark room toward the light under the curtain. His re-entrance went unnoticed, and he edged unsteadily around the room toward his valise. The Mystic was holding forth. "Rothrex is an egotistical bum, aptly named. Wroth means angry—against everybody and everything. Rex means king—the ego. But in spite of this I could love him because I understand he tape-records his radio talks in the bathroom, and the grunts you hear are genuine. I like that. It's ironic."

Eve brushed the curtain aside as she entered, and Tom no longer tried to remain obscure. He scooped his valise up in his arms in panic and raced into the store and out into the street. The Mystic called after him, but he did not stop his headlong stagger up the street. After a time, hearing no sound of pursuit, he slackened his pace and soon came to a walk. Breathing heavily, he looked about the deserted streets. The clock over a bank on the corner showed four o'clock. Tom walked on.

He continued to walk until the dawn spread and full daylight came. Finding a restaurant open, he had a cup of black coffee—without sugar and without cream.

In the days that followed, the memory of that first night blurred. Tom was elected to Theta Mu and made some very congenial friends. He got rid of the old cowhide suitcase and replaced it with a new light-weight aluminum two-suit. Frequently he dated among the sorority girls approved by his new brothers. Bosoms did not interest him much any more. When he sized up girls he regarded their waists. He liked a trim, slim waist. He attributed his change in taste to the benevolent influence of the older fraternity men and to his classes in Agricultural Economics.

A Look at the "Beat Generation" Writers

We are all familiar with the term "beat generation." It has come, within the last three years, to connote a variety of American artistic and social phenomena. In its widest sense, "beat generation" describes a group of people involved in a way of life, the positive features of which are general resistance against the values and mores of the American middle class, a total acceptance of all types of sexual behavior, general predilection for "cool jazz," and the adoption of Oriental mysticism in the form of Zen Buddhism as a unifying metaphysics and philosophy of life. The negative features of the way of life described by the adjective "beat" are withdrawal from politics and from the responsibilities of citizenship, withdrawal from the universities and academies, and withdrawal of recognition from all institutions the State provides.

Less widely defined, the "beat generation" is thought of as a group of bohemians, made up of jazz-musicians, writers, artists, college students, and generally dislocated personalities who lead *la vie* "beat" in San Francisco, New York, or Boston—also, in a more isolated manner, in Mexican villages, on the beaches of Southern California, and at various spots in the Rocky and Smoky Mountains. The names of individuals play a larger role in this second visualization of a "beat generation" than in the first. We find grouped here jazz-musicians like Lennie Tristano, Dave Brubeck, and Lester Young, photographers like Harry Redly and Harold Feinstein, writers like the popular novelist Norman Mailer, as well as the poets and authors engaged in the more specifically literary contexts of the movement. These personalities often, though not always, gather in cafes of Bohemian character, surrounded by a coterie made up of the curious and interested. In some of the bars thus frequented, the central attraction is the reading, to the accompaniment of jazz, the works of the "beat generation's" writers and poets.

It is the fairly unorganized group made up of these authors which comprises the most narrow concept subsumed under the term

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"beat generation": the literary movement of that name which, so baptized by its main prose author Jack Kerouac, has attracted wide attention ever since some of its members gathered in a San Francisco art gallery in the fall of 1955 to rebel consciously against the academic tradition in American poetry.

Who are the "beat generation" authors? Even a cursory glance at their biographies shows that they are not a generation in terms of age, ranging, as they do, between the ages of twenty-odd and fifty-odd. Nor are their intellectual, social, and religious backgrounds of sufficient homogeneity to attribute to them a common denominator as to provenance. Are they, then, a "generation" in the sense of literary history—a unified movement of poetic innovation in style with a common philosophical set of beliefs? The answer to this question is not clear at first glance for, among certain ones of the group, a solidarity of style and ideas is readily apparent, though some salient differences also rise readily to view. It is hence necessary to take a closer look at the authors of the "beat generation" and at certain features some of these have in common.

Let us begin with the best known ones—Jack Kerouac and Allan Ginsberg. John (Jack) Kerouac is the author of thirteen novels, of which four, among them *On the Road*, *The Subterraneans*, and *The Dharma Bums*, are published. He is thirty-six years old, a former Columbia University football player and merchant marine sailor. According to Malcolm Cowley, publisher of *On the Road*, Kerouac works on typewriter strip-rolls without revising. He has defined, in the fifth issue of the *Evergreen Review*, a method of writing fiction based on Wilhelm Reich's theory of the orgasm. This method advocates self-expression in the total degree: the author creates his style by leaving his words and associations as they come from him in the hot pitch of creative frenzy.

Allen Ginsberg, four years Kerouac's junior, is the author of the "beat generation's" manifesto, the poem *Howl*. Other major lyrics by Ginsberg include the poem *America*, the opening lines of which

America I've given you all and now I'm nothing.

America two dollars and twenty-seven cents January 17, 1956. have endeared its author to European left-wing intellectuals, a long poem entitled *A Supermarket in California*, and, more recently, a series of lyrics called *Siesta at Xbalba*. Unlike Kerouac, who claims total originality, Ginsberg openly declares himself in his poems to be an imitator of Walt Whitman, Maiakowsky, and Guillaume Apollinaire and a student both of Zen Buddhism and of Mayan mysticism. Like Kerouac, Ginsberg is a product of Columbia University.

In the second string of "beat generation" poets a great and diverse collection of individuals may be placed. To proceed here

from the sublime to the ultra-terrestrial, we should start this list with William Everson, now Brother Antoninus, O.P., a forty-six year old lay brother. Brother Antoninus' verse speaks, in tones reminiscent of Gerard Manley Hopkins of the relations between man and God in a troubled universe. A second Roman Catholic poet, John Logan, has recently had verse of less eminent, but similar, sort published in the *Evergreen Review*. Philip Whalen, an ex-Reed College student and World War II veteran, closes, though in a different vein, the list of "beat generation metaphysicals." He is a Buddhist mystic who, after a period in a Japanese monastery, has settled down to write meditative verse in Berkeley, California.

The authors we may call the "beat generation ultra-terrestrials" seem to be, on the surface, in greatest contrast to the spiritually concerned group of poets just spoken of. But this contrast is superficial: while the poetry of Ginsberg and the prose of Kerouac dwell deliberately on the sordid, the unmentionable, and the socially controversial, they have a concern with values beyond the material ones which is rather clearly stated. Beyond Ginsberg's bloody toilets and Kerouac's bowls of unsanitary oatmeal served in truckers' cafes there lie visions of a peaceful world made strong by the love of comrades and the joys of mystic insight. Zen Buddhism and a kind of comradeship reminiscent of the *Wandervogel* movement in the German Weimar Republic's days, are its ideals.

The works of two other "beat generation" writers beside Ginsberg and Kerouac are in this "ultra-terrestrial" vein: the poetry of Lawrence Ferlinghetti and the prose of Michael Rumaker. Ferlinghetti, thirty-nine, is a San Francisco publisher and the owner of the City Lights Bookshop in that city. Like Ginsberg, he exalts emancipation and resistance to institutions; unlike *Howl*, however, Ferlinghetti's *Pictures of the gone world* and *A Coney Island of the Mind* are series of lyrics consciously imitative of William Carlos Williams' lighter verse and akin in technique to the work of E. E. Cummings. Rumaker, a twenty-six year old graduate of Black Mountain College, writes a prose highly reminiscent of Kerouac's but endowed with a distinctive gift for precise description. His story, "The Desert," printed in the second *Evergreen Review*, shows, as well, that even "beat" prose may gain value from proper punctuation.

Between the "beat generation metaphysicals" and its "ultra-terrestrials," a group of writers should be mentioned which might be termed "beat-generation experimentals." Here we have poets who share a predilection for jazz-rhythm and a certain mystic tone with Whalen, on the one hand, and Ginsberg, on the other, but whose verse is neither topical nor philosophical but concentrated on a communication of images. A typical young "experimental" in

this sense is Michael (Mike) McClure, like Rumaker twenty-six and a product of Black Mountain College, whose verse shows definite echoes of the American imagist movement (Amy Lowell, the early Pound) coupled with an imitation of "cool" jazz-rhythm. Another is Philip Lamantia, a fiftyish ex-anarchist and ex-surrealist. In Lamantia's poems, the strains of "way-out" jazz give motion to a world of Dali watches and William Carlos Williams guitars, melted together in a mystical—but undirected—way. Thirty-nine year old Robert Duncan boldly plays with the *Structure of Rime* in a long *Evergreen Review* poem of that name. Josephine Miles, a full professor of English at the University of California (Berkeley), endows her rather conventional imagist verse, the latest of some years' production, with startling touches evocative of jazz.

Robert Duncan, Josephine Miles—as well as several other less prominent poets published in the City Lights Press, the Jargon Press, and in the *Evergreen Review* make up a segment of the literary "beat generation" which shares with its "metaphysical" and "ultra-terrestrial" segments only a tolerance of unconventional form and language in poetry. Even more clearly than McClure and Lamantia, the minor "beat generation experimentals" are purely literary affiliates of the movement. Their presence within it indicates the "beat generation's" diverse poetic strains and its lack of a cohesive literary doctrine. For, upon further analysis, even my division of these authors into "metaphysicals," "experimentals," and "super-terrestrials" can be shown to be synthetic and arbitrary. Basically, the "beat generation's" authors are too distinctively individualistic to allow their work to be classified. Nor is there, in the maze of Zen Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, cynicism, hedonism, and surrealism which informs their work, any unified philosophical position, save, perhaps, that vague utopian and pacifist goal of man at ease with himself which is shared by both the religious and earthy "beat generation" writers.

We do not, then, have in the "beat generation," a literary movement as such a phenomenon as is understood by most historians of letters. What unifying factors which draw the "beat generation" authors together may be found? Is the "beat" way of life their only cohesive force? Surely not, for Brother Antoninus, Josephine Miles, and John Logan, to mention only three *Evergreen Review* poets, can scarcely (being, respectively, a Dominican lay brother, a nominee for the Executive Committee of the Modern Language Association, and a family-man teaching at Notre Dame) be associated with hot-rods, dope-peddling, or wandering *On the Road*. We must turn, for an answer to this question, to the critical prose of Kenneth Rexroth, the literary apologist for the "beat generation."

Rexroth, a fifty-three year old poet, ex-anarchist, ex-Marxist present-day radio announcer has, within the past two years, pub-

lished several essays on the "beat generation" writers which treat of these in a sympathetic vein. Rexroth's essays are all fairly similar to one another and revolve about four central points:

1. The "beat generation" writers and poets are a unique and startlingly novel phenomenon in American literature.
2. The "beat-generation" writers revive a valuable—indeed the only real tradition in American letters.
3. The "beat generation" writers are the heroes of a long-needed revolution against academic and upper middle-brow writing and criticism in America.
4. The writers of the "beat generation" represent the true spirit of American youth today.

The last point we must leave to the sociologists and social philosophers; the first point is manifestly absurd. For a poet-critic like Rexroth, who has been reading American literature for some thirty-five years, must surely know that experiments in verse and prose have characterized it during that period. We need only recall Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, William Carlos Williams' *Paterson*, Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon*, John Dos Passos' *42nd Parallel*, and Gertrude Stein's *Brewsie and Willie*—all eminent works with that characteristic published in the period 1923-1958 by authors of very diverse sensibilities, to be aware of that fact. To Rexroth's "San Francisco Renaissance" of the 'fifties we can oppose the fugitive agrarian movement of the 'twenties" and the Marxist literary movement of the 'thirties—both, on the surface, collective efforts to bring American letters to a novel, startling, and unique re-birth.

Rexroth's other two assertions, however, that the "beat generation" poets revive a lost tradition in American literature and that theirs is a legitimate revolt against academic poetry and criticism contain enough truth to be looked into carefully. Though Rexroth may never have read Walt Whitman's late critical summary "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," its last sentences are implicit in Rexroth's discussion of the "beat generation's" revival of the true American tradition. Whitman says here:

Concluding with two items for the imaginative genius of the West, when it worthily rises—First, what Herder taught to the young Goethe, that really great poetry is always (like the Homeric or Biblical canticles) the result of a national spirit, and not the privilege of a polish'd and select few; Second, that the strongest and sweetest songs yet remain to be sung.

It is the democratic, rather than the aristocratic, the native, rather than the foreign tradition which are here, in 1891, praised as the desirable background for future American literature. And it is precisely the language of the native common man illuminating democratic sentiments which is, according to Rexroth, being revived

in the prose of Rumaker and Kerouac, the verse of Ginsberg and of Ferlinghetti. The tradition which is revived by these is, according to Rexroth, that of Whitmans spontaneous and revolutionary verse, of Mark Twain's dialectal prose in *Huckleberry Finn*, and of Hart Crane's more energetic lyrics—all as set against the prose of Henry James and the poetry of T. S. Eliot which are condemned as foreign, formalistic, and artificial. There is, at first glance, much truth in Rexroth's assertions, especially as he is careful to allow those foreign authors in whom Ginsberg shows interest (Apollinaire, Beckett, and Maiakowsky) a place in the "beat generation's" tradition and freely admits that some Evergreen Review and *City Lights Press* poets draw on other experimental traditions in their work. Yet there is one factor which Rexroth eliminates from his assessment which, as we shall see, bears some striking resemblances to outstanding "beat generation work"—the Marxist literary effort of the 'thirties.

It is interesting, in this respect, to look at a volume entitled *Proletarian Literature in the United States* (1935). Here we find, for instance, a poem entitled "Thalassa, Thalassa" by James Neugass. It deals with a strike of Greek merchant seamen in the harbor of Buenos Aires and the last stanza of it reads:

"Romance, travel, adventure." So what?—saleswords for slavery.
In Buenos Aires, they went out on strike and they went out solid,
They sat on deck and stared at their officers, sang the Comintern.
Two went under a third mate's Colt. The sharks got another,
They went out solid, they didn't scab, they stayed out and they won

Struck once and won the first small part of what shall be theirs,
The Red Internationale of Seamen and Harborworkers!

For comparison we turn to the madhouse scene in Ginsberg's *Howl*, Part III:

where there are twentyfive-thousand mad comrades all
together singing the final stanzas of the Internationale

where we wake up electrified out of the coma by our own
souls' airplanes roaring over the roof they've come to
drop angelic bombs the hospital illuminates itself imaginary
walls collapse O skinny legions run outside O starry-spangled
shock of mercy the eternal war is here O victory forget your
underwear we're free . . .

It is unlikely that Neugass influenced Ginsberg directly. And Ginsberg's ideas differ from Neugass's: the latter's revolt is newspaper fact; the former's is a madmen's delusion. Yet the tone, the terms, and the form of the statements are remarkably alike.

The same volume which carries "Thalassa, Thalassa" also brings a short story by Albert Maltz called "Man on a Road." Here an anonymous man gives a poor worker a ride and treats him to a cup of coffee:

We went inside. For the first time since I had come upon him in the tunnel he seemed human. He didn't talk, but he didn't slip inside himself either. He just sat down at the counter and waited for his coffee. When it came, he drank it slowly, holding the cup in both hands as though to warm them. When he had finished, I asked him if he wouldn't like a sandwich. He turned around to me and smiled. It was a very gentle, a very patient smile. His big, lumpy face seemed to light up with it and became understanding and sweet and gentle.

The smile shook me all through. It didn't warm me—it made me feel sick inside. It was like watching a corpse begin to stir. I wanted to cry out "My God, you poor man!"

And we turn to Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*:

all dead bums forever dead with nothing and all finished and out—there—and this was the clientele in the Public Hair restaurant where I ate many's the morn a 3-egg breakfast with almost dry toast and oatmeal a little saucer of . . . my 26-cent breakfast, my pride—and that incredible semiqueer counterman who dished out the food, threw it at you, slammed it, has a languid frank expression straight in your eyes like a 1930's lunchcart heroine in Steinbeck . . .

where, once more, the resemblance between the Marxist and the "beat generation" style is striking. Maltz and Kerouac present the same mixture of dramatic human expression in similarly sordid surroundings. Their contexts are, of course, different: Maltz's old man is dying of silicosis from working in a mining tunnel; Kerouac's protagonist is an intellectual earning a full professor's salary as a railway brakeman who eats his 26-cent breakfast to prove that it can still be eaten in the San Francisco of the 'fifties.

Proof that Marxist prose is of importance for understanding the "beat generation's" literary tradition does not invalidate the latter. Nor does the absence of a social purpose in the "beat generation's" writings force us to condemn these and brand them feeble, pointless imitators of Marxist literature. For theirs is a different story, told to a different age. But Rexroth's assertion that Whitman, Twain, and Hart Crane make up the "beat generation's" direct ancestry must here be modified to include Marxist elements from the 'thirties.

Rexroth's statement that the "beat generation" writers are the gadflies for a needed revolt against conventional academic poetry is perhaps the truest of his claims. For, since the end of the American Marxist movement in literature, no unified group of writers in present-day America has dared to be scornful both of the popular media communication (the press, radio, and television) and of the conventional unconventionality of upper middle brow magazines of the *Atlantic Monthly* variety, before the "beat generation" writers took this step. No frontal attack but the "beat generation's" has been delivered recently, from an outlook neither openly Marxist nor patently *bourgeois*, against the control which the New Criticism

and the agrarian fugitive tradition exercise today over the emergence of younger literary talents. It is impossible, in America today, to study American or English literature on the university level without being indoctrinated, at one point or the other, with the critical views of John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Randall Jarell, R. P. Blackmur, or Lionel Trilling—to mention only the most prominent names among the professor-poet-critics who control the *Kenyon Review*, the *Hudson Review*, and the *Partisan Review*. It is very hard, by the same token, to break into print as a young writer or critic without being, in some way, a recognizable imitator of the older New Critics or ex-fugitive agrarians. The “beat generation” writers attack this rather rigid tradition, not because they oppose the creative and critical efforts of the Kenyon school, but because they resent the control of vested academic and publishing interests over the expression of the critical and creative spirit. And in this they are, I feel, right. Unfortunately, the “beat generation” has no unified critical doctrine, no poetics to support its polemic—the extreme individualism which gave the “beat generation” writers strength to launch their protest paradoxically negates the development of a strong intellectual point of view.

We have attempted, here, to give the “beat generation” writers and poets a close look. What we found is a group of young to middle-aged creative talents of some merit who neither perform in a unified literary style nor defend a common intellectual or spiritual point of view, save, perhaps, a tendency toward mysticism and pacifism cultivated by the metaphysical and ultra-terrestrial extremes of the movement. We found that, in the light of the experimental tradition in contemporary American poetry and prose, the “beat generation writers’” claims to uniqueness and originality within it are absurd. We saw, as well, that proletarian literature of the ’thirties plays a significant part in their literary ancestry and disqualifies Rexroth’s claims that Ginsberg and Kerouac bring to a renaissance the dormant spirit of American folk-literature as exemplified by Whitman and Twain. Finally we saw that the “beat generation writers’” polemic against the strangleholds both of commercialism and of the cliquish spirit of New Critics and ex-fugitive agrarians is a healthy and positive feature of their approach to contemporary American letters. If they could only develop a unified point of view to spearhead their critical attack, the writers of the “beat generation” could bring great benefit to our literary scene.

Diversion

"Gladly . . ." Howard said. "I would gladly exchange the anonymity of a large city for what we have here." He snapped his fingers. "Just like that!"

Howard had to keep talking until the beer came, for his friend Logan had perfected the habit of not speaking a word until the glasses were before them and they had each taken a first sip. Whenever Marlene, the waitress, was slow this way, Howard carried the conversation alone; it was a responsibility he had been assuming with increased frequency during the last twenty years. Howard and Logan, both in their mid-forties and both among Grove End's most respected family men, relished their quiet Saturday afternoons in the high wooden booth in the rear corner of Blue's Tavern. The iced glasses of draft beer were unequaled in these parts. Then too, there was a certain relaxation to be had in summing up the week's happenings and in speaking frankly of their innermost gripes.

Since Howard was just starting to lecture on his favorite topic, he was not actually displeased by Marlene's slowness. A remarkably fat and unperturbable woman, Marlene was one waitress who could not be hurried. Any effort to hasten her, even by her favorite customers, would work the opposite effect. Her inclination to do as she damn well pleased was her way of asserting her personality, her importance to the world. She had, Howard supposed, stopped to listen to dirty jokes from some salesman planted atop one of the wobbly bar stools. A deep-throated spasm of womanly laughter echoed from the other room.

"You want to know something, Logan?" Howard began speaking with magnificent determination, jabbing the air sharply with his clenched right fist. "I'm about ready to pull up stakes and get the hell out of this one-horse town. I've got a longing to be some place where the drug store clerk doesn't know that I read murder mysteries and where the butcher doesn't know that I can't digest pork. I'd like to be some place where we could have a few beers together without the high school kids snickering if they see us here, and then telling their parents, and then our getting those dirty looks

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as though we had corrupted their little morals or something. I'd even like a postman who didn't read my post cards and then ask point-blank when Beth's mother is coming for her visit. Oh, hell," he said. "Maybe it's just the weather."

Howard was a person on whom the weather had treacherous emotional effects. Logan was of a more even temperament. The fact that he had five children—Howard and Beth had only two—may have contributed to his placidity. Logan had often told Howard that after the third one you are crazy as hell anyway, and that you may as well go on and have a dozen. Logan listened as he had so many times in the past, but he offered no comment. However, he did begin to mull over what he would say once Marlene brought their beer. Like Marlene, Logan was not a person to be hurried.

"This weather is awful." Howard continued his monologue. "I honest to God don't see how it could be this bad anywhere else. I'll bet we didn't have five pretty days all winter. When you step out day after day into gloomy, drizzly, windy weather, it's bound to affect a person. I read in a magazine article that the suicide tendency is about ten times stronger in weather like we've been having lately. I look out the breakfast room window in the morning before I even leave the house, and it just depresses the pure hell out of me. And the kids. They go from coughs to sore throats to earaches, and then they start over again. If we had five like you do, we'd have to open a damn infirmary."

Howard didn't realize that he was talking so loudly until he looked up and saw a grinning Marlene standing there at the end of the booth. The table's edge cut a ridge in her gelatinous flesh as she leaned out across the two men and placed a metal dispenser, newly filled with paper napkins, on the far end of the table top. Marlene reached again and set down the two heavy glasses. She always handled the giant beer glasses by slipping the stem between her middle fingers and then hooking her thumb just over the top. She licked the foam from her thumb before wiping her hand on the bottom of her red and white checkered apron. "There's hardly anything," she said, "that will relax a man like a glass of Blue's beer." With a tired brush of her elbow she pushed back a loose tendril of brown hair from her wide forehead. "You fellows been teaching hard all week?" she wanted to know. "Did you really bear down on them and learn them something?"

"Indeed we did." Howard and Marlene swapped a roughish wink. "Don't forget," he said, "to bring me an egg when you get around to it, and bring Logan a package of peanuts." Logan was inordinately fond of peanuts. When they were children together, Logan used to always put a nickel pack in his coke before drinking it. After they went away to State Teacher's College and came back and started drinking beer together, Logan kept on with the peanuts.

Personally, Howard preferred his egg. Even when grade A eggs were eighty cents a dozen, Blue continued, as a courtesy to his customers, to sell them for a nickel each. Nothing went better with cold beer than a hard boiled egg.

Marlene seemed reluctant to leave them. "We gonna beat Gloverville?" she asked.

"I'm not sure," Howard told her. "The Johnston boy has appendicitis, and I'm not sure how the team will play without him." She was at least the tenth person today who had asked the same question. In addition to his primary duty of teaching history and civics at Grove End High, Howard had been doing extra work as an assistant coach for many years now. His friend Logan, as treasurer of the Grove End High Athletic Association, had the privilege of handling all the budgeting, purchasing, ticket selling, and book-keeping for the high school teams. Since Logan was a math teacher, he had been a natural for the job. Each of the other five teachers had been drawn into similar outside work. When old man Piersall had his hernia operation about three years ago, Howard had actually pitched in and driven the school bus for a period of several weeks. All of these non-paying extra chores were somewhat compensated for when the students mentioned the teacher's unselfish devotion; yearly they dedicated the annual to each of the seven in turn.

Marlene turned and walked toward the entrance to the front room. Her elephantine hips swung beneath the checkered apron, and the floor creaked beneath her ponderous footfalls.

Logan took his first sip of beer. "That's what the old doctor ordered," he said. He crossed his bony legs, pivoted, and swung his feet upward so as to extend them beyond the outer edge of the cushioned seat. Then he relaxed against the angle occurring where the wooden booth back joined the plastered wall. "It's the weather," he said. "This weather has been right enervating."

"Weather, hell!" Howard said. "Always we blame it on the weather, but it's really Grove End. Like I say, I got half a mind to tell Beth to start packing. I'm still young enough to move, and it depresses the utter hell out of me when I think of staying here and being buried out there on Cedar Ridge. We been here too long as it is, Logan, about twenty years too long. No offense, but the good ones get away. I've always known that. Sometimes I feel that I'm going to explode, fly into a million pieces, if I don't get out of this town."

"You think that it would really be different somewhere else—that it really matters where you are?"

"The west coast," Howard said. "They pay good salaries out there. I'd like to be out there with those good salaries, and that warm sunshine, and the kids not sick all the time. I just don't care to be

buried on Cedar Ridge. All of Grove End would be standing around and talking quietly about me, and knowing damn near everything about my whole life. It's just that I'd like the freedom of being unknown."

"You've been saying the same thing for the last ten years," Logan reminded him. "Every time the weather stays bad and we can't go fishing or play golf, you're ready to pack. And each year, each time you mention it, the thing gets less likely. You got far too many roots here."

"The trouble is I don't want roots. They've come about by inertia—simply because I've lacked the gumption to start over." Howard shook his head slowly from side to side. "Life here has grown more involved each year—more organizations and more responsibilities of all kinds—until I've lost the time to live. When you stop and think about it, that's the only thing a man has of real value—time, I mean."

"No pleasures at all," Logan said. "Poor fellow."

Howard ignored him; he was too intent on getting the thing said. "I'll grant that we have our Saturday afternoons of cold beer—beer which is all the more delicious because Grove End begrudges it to me. Being a teacher, I'm not to have the instincts of a normal human being. I am to serve devotedly, never complaining about extra work and a low salary, and I am to be a model for the youth of Grove End. What I want is to get away from the unsleeping eyes of Grove End. I want time of my own."

Marlene was there again, holding the egg and the package of peanuts warmly in the palm of her hand. "The bread man just told me a hot one," she said. "That fellow sure does get around though. Seeing everybody in the county the way he does, he really hears all the good ones."

"Howard," Logan said, "there's a tempting profession for you. I read in the paper the other day that the best math teacher in Jacksonville had resigned and taken a job driving a bakery truck. Seems that it paid fifty dollars more a month and that he had four kids. This fellow had his picture in the paper because he had been given an award as the best teacher in the city during the preceding year."

"You fellows slay me," Marlene said. "You wouldn't do nothing else and you know it."

"Fifty dollars would buy a lot of beer," Howard said.

"Hush," Marlene said. "Here's your egg. Say," she added. "That bread man told me that the Johnston boy didn't really have the appendicitis. Said he heard he caught something from that girl over in Gloverville."

"No," Logan said. "It's not true. The boy doubled up in my plane geometry class, and I got the principal to drive him over to the hospital."

"What do you know?" Marlene put her hands on her hips. "I guess that bread driver heard it all wrong. Course, that Johnston boy has been fooling around with the Hadly girl right enough, and everybody knows what she is. That boy is getting a mite too big for his britches. Comes in here telling me that he's eighteen and old enough to buy beer. Why, I've knowed him since the day he was born."

"He's a good kid," Howard said. "It's just that he's bright and has a lot of energy to work off. There's not enough around here to keep him busy."

"Wait a minute there!" Marlene spoke with aroused patriotism. "Don't you go throwing off on Grove End. You'd hafta go mighty far to find a better little community than we go right here. Didn't our team go to the regionals in basketball last year, and didn't we scare the pants off Carson City. And them with a school three times as big."

"Nobody is throwing off on Grove End," Logan said. "It's just the weather. It's been raining too much."

"Ain't it the gospel truth," Marlene agreed. "I got a terrible chest cold. I been putting salve and a flannel rag on it every night, but it don't get no better." She picked up the empty beer glasses, hooking them together with the scarred fingers of her left hand. Almost every time she sliced a tomato, she reinjured her fingers. "I'll fill these up for you," she said.

Howard and Logan sat in mute contemplation of the ringed table top. Someone had played a quarter's worth of hillbilly records; the nasal pleading of the singer and the taut whang of the electric guitar overflowed the room. It may have been Marlene, Howard thought. Whenever she got a tip, she thrust it into the bubbling juke box and selected her favorites; always they were romantic ballads of lost love. Marlene was single. When she had first started working here as a plump young girl of eighteen, she had almost married Blue. One or the other of them had called it off, and since that time she had spent twenty years growing fat on Blue's beer.

Logan began cleaning his fingernails with the unburned end of a paper match. "You really think," he said, "that it would be better some place else. Besides, you got any idea what it would cost to move to the west coast?"

"I made an inquiry about ten years ago." Howard spoke with rising interest. "I could have done it then for six hundred dollars. Course, prices have gone up a lot since that time. Probably cost at least a thousand today."

"And what would you have once you got there?"

"I'd have a change! That's what I'd have." Howard thumped his fingers on the table.

"No you wouldn't," Logan said. "It would be just the same. It would be bigger and noisier, but just the same."

"Like hell it would!" Howard pushed his hands against the table's edge. "It would really be different. Sunshine and ocean breezes and a nice modern home."

"No," Logan insisted. "It's just the same no matter where you are. Personally, I'd just as soon stay here and be buried on Cedar Ridge."

"With all of them standing around and gawking and knowing damn near everything you said or thought your entire life?"

"At least they would be there," Logan said. "I wouldn't want to be buried out on the west coast. It's all right for those that belong out there, but I just don't."

"What you fellows arguing about?" Marlene had returned with the giant beer glasses. "What's all this talk about dying?" she wanted to know. "You two is in the prime of life. You're my age, ain't you? I'm in the prime of life."

"Sometimes," Howard said, "I feel that I'm over the hill—that I've always been over the hill."

"It's the weather," Logan reassured him. "You'll feel differently once it clears up and we get out on the golf course."

"I wish I'd learned to play golf," Marlene said. "That's one thing I always wanted to do."

"Why don't you try it," Logan suggested. "Lots of women play golf these days."

"Naw," Marlene said. "Not when they're my size, they don't. I couldn't take that extra walking. I'm on my feet all the time here at the tavern, and I couldn't walk up and down them hills. Here's your beer," she said, bending far out over the table and setting down the full glasses gently so as not to slosh them over. "If there's one thing does a man more good than beer, it's more beer." She tossed a second package of peanuts in front of Logan before she walked away.

"Where were we?" Howard asked.

"You were getting ready to leave Grove End," Logan said. "I believe you were going to go home and tell Beth to start packing."

"That's exactly what I ought to do."

"It's the weather," Logan said. "Soon as it clears up a bit, you'll change your whole attitude."

"Weather, hell!" Howard said.

"Drink your beer," Logan said. "There's nothing any worse than hot beer."

Joanne de Longchamps

In Metaphor Of Sea

Say time up-bellied floats a grey fish
—sea our beginning, endless metaphor—
Simple tricks have failed, no somewhere sail
leads from trough to certain shore
but hushed as scream in dream all signal shouts
shatter on void. The grey fish floats.

• • •

I walk the winter of this seaward town
jacketed to all weathers but my own—
Out of dubious memory a voice
remains to ghost me, was it ghost that said
“under the sidewalk, love, are lively stones,
we take our city stroll on jeweled bones.”
The fish of hours rides a landlocked sea.
I am undone by needy acts undone,
desperate invalid driven at last to leave
securities of snug renunciation—

A resident of Reno, Nevada, JOANNE DE LONGCHAMPS has published in
Western Review, *Coastlines*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *The Carolina Quarterly*.

Cry wrong, wrong-headed medics of a moral,
the weather of your counsel stays at cold,
remove sad cure, revive the sweet disease—
our greyfish flesh in throes of turning gold!
Ask what is world if hungry eye records
and blood refuses, balked in its pleasuring.
For lover's heat the paged word comes alive
like a blond beast purring on the nerve,
a lion of fables speaking sweet as men.
O I will daze-walk in my house of rooms
in a drunken reel of after-images,
the squared sharp book-edge open to a phrase
pressed hard to breastbone—words
like honeyed paws or hands with amorous ways.
Time turns, a grey form stretching out of sleep.
For comfort say no wave repeats a wave—
Intricate ebb and tentacle of foam
in game of alteration places and pulls back
curved calcium ornaments. Loss-struck
strike out again for love,
those tides that bluely rearrange,
that, shifting, shake grey fish to leap,
a drifting death changed to a swimmer's shape.

The Night Alone and the Day on Fire

I was twenty-one years old and I was in college. A terrible thing happened that day; or at least, that night. You go along in your life and then a thing happens which hurts you. It is so important that you can never forget it and it seems to make everything different. With me, it has to do with the sun; I mean, the day; and the night which followed.

It came over me on the day I saw the man. On the street where I turned into town, there was a high bank on one side and a muddy driveway. He was an amputee. I saw him in the driveway. His legs were amputated and the trunk of his legs were strapped to a platform. He was holding onto the limb of a sort of willowy shrub. He apparently wanted to let himself down the drive; but his arm and the limb were not long enough for him to get to the sidewalk. The bank of the driveway was muddy. When I saw him, the front wheels of the platform were tilted up and he seemed about to sit in the mud. He stared at me. He had a hook nose and a red face.

"Will you help me, buddy?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

I took off my glasses and put them in my overcoat. It was cold. The snow had just melted on the ground.

"Grab the shrub," he said.

I walked carefully up over the mud. I grabbed the limb of the bush and then he grabbed my other hand. His hand felt scaly. At the side, toward the back of his neck, there was a large, red sore. A mat of black hairs grew out of it. It was inflamed and swollen. The skin looked gauzy. My lips tingled. I bit them, and turned my head.

His grip relaxed in my hand. I looked around. He had settled himself with his platform safely on the sidewalk.

"I let my cousin drag me up last night," he said.

"Do you shave your legs?" I asked. I gasped. I do not know, even now, why I said it.

"Sonny, are you kidding?"

"No," I said. I walked numbly, somehow without slipping, down the bank.

DAN FOWLER is a student at the University of North Carolina. This is his first published work.

"I mean 'yes.' I want a pencil. I'll take all of them. I need them."

He smiled at me pityingly.

"I don't sell pencils. I sell newspapers."

I turned without looking at him anymore and walked away. He shouted something at me, but I did not hear it. He laughed in a deep, guttural sound. I felt the dark glasses in my pocket and I put them back on. The houses along the way looked green.

In town, the sun hung just above the street in the west. It would be dark soon. People rushed back and forth from cars and stores. The students ate dinner in the cafes I passed. There was a place where they sold pickled weiner sausages. They sold beer there. It was called the "Nest." I opened the door and walked down a flight of cold, curving, cement steps until I came to the bar.

The bar had a veneer of varnished pine. There were several people at the bar and in the booths. There were booths on the left, and beyond the bar, more booths. They were of varnished pine. The electric light came from small holes high in the ceiling. The walls and rafters in the ceiling were of varnished pine. The bartender was an old man. He had wrinkles around his eyes. The corners of his mouth tilted up, and the wrinkles gave him a smile.

"Good afternoon," he said politely.

"Hey," I said.

I put the dark glasses on the counter. The bartender gave me a sausage on a napkin and a package of Saltine crackers wrapped in cellophane. I ordered a beer. I hated to drink anything then, but I had to. I knew that from experience. I had to take it easy. When you have a hang-over, you have to drink a few beers to get to sleep that night. My hands were steady; they were not shaking. It was nothing like that. I only felt tired and tense. I made six beers the limit. I could drink them slow and go to sleep. I sipped it and stared at the pine veneering. The sausage felt salty and juicy in my mouth.

"I don't see how you eat those things." There was laughter.

Two young men, about my age, were seated near me at the corner of the bar. The one who spoke sat next to me. He stared at the other.

"Much too far from potatoes." He stared at the potato chips the other was eating.

"Oh, come now. They're no more out of the way than pretzels." The other had blond, crew-cut hair. He called the one next to me Leon Graham.

Leon Graham smiled and shrugged.

"It makes no difference."

He was small and thin. He spoke in a shrill, high voice. He had short-cut hair, which was black and which fell forward onto his forehead. There was a broken cellophane-topped box of pretzels in

front of him. He grasped several and bit them in half. The loose crumbs fell onto the bar. A half-empty bottle of Coca-Cola and an empty glass stood at his elbow. He never touched the glass. As he talked, he pawed at the blond one's arms.

"It is only by realizing the meaninglessness of life that it is possible to know its reality," Leon Graham said.

I knew that he was talking about something that he remembered from some lecture. But what he said about the meaninglessness of life, I thought, was true. I thought of the amputee.

"Know that it is a tale told by an idiot, primarily. Then, one may intuit its reality."

He nibbled at the pretzels. Half-eaten pretzels were scattered in front of him. At times, he and the other paused and listened to the music. It was progressive jazz. That was the only kind of music the "Nest" had.

"Most people are inauthentic. Not that it matters."

I did not know what he was talking about now.

"This is my Christianity. Let all men know the hopelessness of love and so share something deeper than love itself."

I stopped listening and watched them. Leon Graham stroked the blond one's face. His hand were small and very white. The blond boy was tanned and handsome. He seemed to be pleased. He smiled.

I looked away. I ate the sausage and finished it; and ordered another beer. I began to feel lonely. I felt that if I moved from the bar stool, I would fall a thousand feet. I decided at that moment that I wanted to die. It was part of the hang-over. It happens at times. Things come over me—just as it did with the amputee. The feeling would leave. I tried not to think about dying.

Leon Graham turned and looked at me. His eyes glittered. They were small and oval.

"Do you poker?" He spoke in a calm, modulated voice, not in the shrill, raspy way he spoke to the handsome boy. He smiled. His teeth were very sharp, crooked, and tobacco-stained.

For some reason, he frightened me.

"Yes," I said. I caught my breath. My heart pounded.

He took a swallow from the coke bottle. His teeth protruded over the rim. He seemed to be considering whether to speak further.

"Oh, Leon," the handsome boy said.

"Come on."

Leon Graham shrugged. He grinned at me.

"All right." He flapped his hand.

He and his friend left and I stayed in the bar and sipped the beer. I watched the "Nest" fill up. I saw more queers—like Leon Graham; but mostly there were couples from college and the people

from town. It was getting hot and noisy but the music was good. I was beginning to feel much better. They had a selection box in each booth. The music was good. I felt rather pleasant. I finished my sixth beer at eight-thirty and left.

Outside, the wind was icy and it cut into your skin. The lights from the store windows lit up the street. People walked back and forth in the light. The beer had hardly touched me. I felt relaxed and pleasant. It will be all right, I thought. I turned down my street. It was dark. The street lamps shone in a yellow light along the bare tree branches. There were no stars in the sky. The rooming house looked warm. I felt that it would not be such a bad night. By the next morning, everything would be all right. I could get a job. The stores in town usually needed someone.

I bathed again, taking my time. After that, I picked up all the papers and books in my room and put them on the desk. I put all my soiled clothes in the laundry bag on the inside of the closet. I turned off the lights and got into bed. A neighbor's backyard light shone up on the wall. I could see my light globe hanging from the ceiling. It was a pink globe hanging on a chain. A decoration of roses and vines separated the chain from the ceiling. My landlady had painted them on the plaster. She could not paint very well, and they did not look like roses.

I will be all right, I thought. I decided to think about a girl. It would be all right, I thought. I imagined the same girl each night. She was tall, but not taller than me, and she was slender. She had a good figure. She had a smooth, even face and a nice nose, tilted up a little. Her face was strong, and gentle and lovely. Her hair was light brown and came down full to her neck. She would know how to take care of her hair. I turned my head and crushed my face in the pillow. I imagined long-pointed steel claws, and I pulled them down my face. I pulled them down again and again. It is something I imagine a lot. I have had it all my life. I turned over and stretched out straight on the bed. I folded my hands on my chest. I forced myself not to think about anything. I fell asleep.

I heard a roaring sound. It was the hissing of a gas heater. The house looked dim and everything changed shape in the dim light. I heard the man next door mowing his lawn. A black, heavy fog hung in the hall and in the rest of the house. In the kitchen the rats were talking. They jabbered loudly and held playing cards in their hands. They sat around the kitchen table. I could not hear what they said. Some of them were in the living room at the end of the hall. They were long-nosed, gray rats. The furniture took the shape of graham crackers and they ate it. From the next room I could hear loud snoring. The man and the woman were in the bed sleeping. The door to their room was open. I saw the woman's hair pressed into the white pillow, and the man disappeared. My scottie

dog had stiff black hairs. They stood mashed together and his legs stuck out straight as little black rods and he lay dead; and he turned over and lay dead just above the woman's head.

"My darling," the woman said, and I felt her bare legs against mine under the cold sheets.

That was the dream. It ended like that. I woke up. The light still shone on the pink globe hanging from the ceiling. It hung down through the painted lacework decorations. The room looked dim. I got up and turned on the desk lamp. I sat in the chair and smoked a cigarette. The smoke filtered up through the lamp.

"Jesus Christ," I whispered.

My hands shook. I put the cigarette between my lips and puffed on it down to the end. I mashed it out in the ashtray. I waited for a moment and then I stood up and turned on all the lights in the room. I opened the door into the hall. The hall light came up the stairway. I walked to the bathroom and washed my hands and my face.

"You drunk," I said, to the face in the mirror.

I left the lights on in my room. I stared up at the ceiling. I lay in the bed stretched out stiff as a rod, and I lay that way for a long time. At about four-thirty in the morning I felt relaxed enough to fall asleep again. Then I found out that I wanted to die. The worst part of it happened then. After it happened, I wanted to die.

I heard a funny sound outside my door. I raised up on my elbows. The door opened. In the doorway there was the rat, or weasel. He was very big. His eyes were small and light blue. He did not look at me. He began moving, sniffing around the room. He moved to the table next to my bed. I tried to jump out, but I could not. I wanted to yell. He ran under my bed. I heard him sniffing. He jumped up under the covers of my bed. I saw the curve of his back moving under the covers. I felt him against my legs. He moved to my side. He seemed to be trying to burrow under me. I felt him at the base of my spine, pushing up. I arched my back up and tried to scream. My mouth opened, but I could not make a sound. I heard him snuffling up my back. I stared at the door, but it was closed. My neck arched back and I groaned. I heard the groan. It sounded as if it came up from the bottom of my stomach. Then I could not feel it. The animal was no longer under me.

I fell back onto the bed. I looked up at the pink globe hanging from the ceiling. I did not want to move from the bed. My mouth felt dry and furry. I cleared my throat.

At about five-thirty the landlady came into my room. Her hair was put up in curls. She had white hair. Her face was round and pallid. Her cheeks sagged, and cold cream glistened on her face. She wore a faded wool bathrobe and scuffed slippers. She

stared for a moment at the bourbon in the peanut butter glass. She gazed at me.

She spoke loudly. "Is anything the matter?"

"No, ma'am."

"I thought I heard you yelling." She stared at me suspiciously.

"It's nearly morning."

"I guess I'm not sleepy."

She nodded. She looked at the lights. She did not like to see them on.

"Well," she said. She moved her pale lips.

She closed the door. I got up and went over to the dresser. I took a razor from the shaving kit. It was a new one with a blue wrapper. I went back and sat on the edge of the bed. I unwrapped it and held the blade over my left arm at the wrist and kept it. The skin on the inside of my wrist is light, almost pink and there is a network of small veins running beneath it. There is one big vein. It is near the center. I lowered the razor very slowly onto my skin at the edge of my wrist. The silver edge of the blade glittered. I drew the blade across. A small furrow of blood appeared across the pale skin. I did not cut the vein. The blood came up in patches of tiny round globules. I studied the furrow closely.

If I shaved the rat's neck before I cut it. . . . In my mind, I cut off his neck.

"Now," I said.

I did not move. I held the razor poised tightly between my thumb and my forefinger and I did not move. I held it until the skin of my thumb must have turned white. Then my hand began to shake. I blinked my eyes. Slowly, I reached over and lowered the razor onto the table next to the clock and dropped it. It clinked lightly on the wood. The rat was already dead.

I lay back over the top of the covers.

There was a knock on the door. I turned my wrist against my leg. In the door stood one of the roomers. He was a new roomer; he was new to me. He smiled cheerfully.

"Let's eat breakfast. I'll wait for you."

"I'm not hungry," I said.

"Oh, come on."

I thought of coffee. "All right."

He hesitated. "Hey, what's eating you?"

"Nothing," I said.

He closed the door. The sunlight gradually came into the room and the electric lights dimmed. The red ball of the sun edged over the houses and trees in the neighborhood, and the sun shone through my window.

The Odd Lot

At ten P.M. a needling March wind was pushing along the streets in the night and piloting two graduate students, Marianne and Don, into a narrow road leading towards the river; a road full of long-unrepainted four-story houses where more graduate students and other types of hangers-on lived and read by the 60-watt bulbs in the grey small rooms. Marianne could see heads behind cheesecloth curtains, bending over desks or looking through rows of books, some of the bulbs glaring unshaded above the students' heads. In one window a frizzy-headed old landlady rocked in her Boston rocker on a rugless floor, and in another an old man in shirt-sleeves sat with his head on his table, a quart beer-bottle beside him.

The students had been shut out of the library stalls for the night, and were trying to lose themselves in their private orbits in the dark rooms, surrounded by their own miserable self-environs without the slight sanction of the frosted glass walls around them, and the mountains of books that harbored the prestige they were trying to attain. How close to the real undercurrent world it all was, and how unlike what they were supposed to be preparing for, Marianne thought.

Marianne snatched a sidelong glance at Don as they went under the street light, then looked away quickly. All his features seemed to protrude unnecessarily, and his glasses, very thick, shadowed his face with their black rims. Good sax player, his friends kept telling her, and she had finally gone out with him after three months of telephone calls. This was only about the second or third time she'd seen him, and the other two times she had made him take her up to Hugh's room, because that was the only way she could get to see Hugh now.

She had walked the streets with Hugh all during the Fall session and listened to him talk about Bach and Mozart, the difference between *infra-lapsarian* and *supra-lapsarian*, the uselessness of Plato's concepts, and had gone around using his unpleasantly witty remarks as though they were her own until she had accumulated a reputation for cleverness. She had sat in the stalls daily lost obsessively in the thought of him, and had gotten no work done at all.

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Her roommate, Laura, a squat, bespectacled girl whose hands were always peeling and who always got A's, told her, "You're infatuated with the impossible, you're in love with unreality, you're making yourself deliberately sick." And Marianne's mother had written, "After all, dear there's no point in keeping a toe-hold on this boy, and besides the life you're leading now has nothing to do with your becoming a wife and mother someday." She had included a wedding picture of herself and Marianne's father in his army uniform, and Marianne had stared a long time at the dark handsome eyes under the Captain's hat, and remembered her last view of him, gaunt in his mustard-coloured bathrobe as he rose from his death-bed to throw a book at her because she had shut his door too sharply. He had died on her 14th birthday, and when she was ten he had hit her ten sharp blows on the hand with a steel ruler for breaking a gold pencil that had belonged to his grandfather. Her hand had gotten red and swollen and had been stiff for four days. After he hit her she'd gone and buried her face in the living room couch, beating on the pillow with her good hand. Her mother had leaned over her and whispered, "It'll be all right hon, he didn't mean to do it that hard. Every father hits his children now and then, and we just have to learn to take the bad with the best in this world."

The simplicity of other people's statements! Why did there have to be so few who followed any thought to its intricate conclusion; what was so inescapably alluring about stock responses; what made people cling to the hopelessly narrow rut that led them to their graves? Marianne did feel sick; she knew she wasn't getting anything she wanted, but wouldn't have changed for anything. I love my neuroses, she said to herself, after seeing a MacNiece play with the line in it.

Marianne and Don were going to see Stuart in his attic room at the end of the street. They knew he would be home. He sat there every night like a troll in his cave, and Hugh had taken her to see him a few times before. There were always five or six people seated around him on the floor every night, drinking beer and making conversation that fascinated Marianne, every remark having several possible meanings and leading to conclusions that left every man to himself. Perhaps Hugh would be there tonight.

The bottom floors of the house were dark, but there was a weak glow in the attic window and they mounted the four flights like marauders and rapped on the little cut-out square in the ceiling that was the trap-door entrance to his room. As usual, they had given no advance notice of their visit.

The jumbled room, containing most noticeably an enormous poster of a cigarette-smoking blond in a low-cut electric blue dress, a large pair of red and green maraccas, a pair of brass Spanish spurs,

a mounted dried snake hung around the walls, and a collage on the mantel made out of a dirty leather glove, some wire coat hangers and three whitened bones, was lit by one dim lamp in back of the only chair, a very small rocker.

There were three people sitting on the floor and Stuart was in bed, wearing a blue pin-striped shirt. Marianne and Don sat down in a corner near the trap-door, across from two pale fragil-looking boys named Seymour and Bob. In front of the rocker sat a blond angel-faced boy named Race Newton, who was known to be a pretty good trumpet player, and who very seldom spoke. He sat with his eyebrows raised in anticipation.

"Have you filed your application for this conversation?" barked Stu at Marianne, who sat staring glumly and unresponsively into the light.

"I want to see Hugh," she whined. She flung back her waist-length mouse-blond hair, which was terribly tangled and matted by the wind.

"Oh, he'll come in pretty soon—he *can't* stay out," said Stu, pontifically. "Go get 'im," he jerked his head with a Humphrey Bogart gesture toward the two pale boys, who rose and sauntered out, not to return.

Shortly afterward there were footsteps on the stair and the small blond head of Hugh emerged through the trap-door. He wore a grey coat and a red scarf, and carried the score of a Brandenburg Concerto under his arm. His eyes were green, deep-set, and faintly slanted like a satyr's. A friend of his who was fond of the *Magic Mountain* called them "Khirghiz eyes." He walked with a little shuffle, his shoulders rounded and his head slightly forward. His face was eager and a little suspicious.

"Has he filed his applicay-shun?" asked Don in a sing-song, parrot-like voice.

"Well," said Stu, wearily, "Maybe *he* hasn't, but some well-meaning but misguided friend has." Everyone laughed except Marianne, who sat quietly, with downcast eyes.

Race Newton moved away from in front of the empty rocker and Hugh sat down in it and spoke in his soft voice with the faint Cleveland accent. "Whatsa matter? Ah ran into Bob and Seymour and they said to come here." He sounded as though he knew quite well what the matter was. His eyes were also downcast.

"Hey Hugh—why are you rebelling?" Stu started off with one of his ostensibly electrifying and provocative questions, most of which had been used on many other occasions like this which Hugh had witnessed before. He did not feel obliged to answer.

Stu tried another on him, "What do you think this is—ping-pong or billiards?"

After a long pause, "Go to hell, Stu—I don't like you," said Hugh, softly, but without a trace of malice in his tone.

"Well," there a slight note of apology in Stu's voice, "You know when you play ping-pong and you hit the ball and it goes under the table, you look around and then you come out and you find you've stepped on it."

Hugh looked over at him with a faint smile. "I'll give you ten points, Stu. You're a flop and you know it."

Stu got up on one elbow, glittering with readiness to launch into his project. "Pretty well satisfied with yourself, aren't you. You know, I wouldn't talk to you like this if I didn't think it was necessary. How about it, Hugh? Do *you* think you're hopeless?" He paused, but not for an answer. "The trouble with you is, you have too many psychotic friends. I have this theory that neurotic people go around trying to infect others with their neuroses. They want everyone to be in the same leaky boat." He glanced over at Marianne and Don, then continued, "Answer me this—do you have a mother?"

"Every fly has," said Hugh, his eyes on the floor.

"Now tell me, what is this thing called love," Stu asked him.

"Sa song," Hugh rocked in his chair a little.

"No, I didn't say what is this thing called 'What is This Thing Called Love,' I said—"

"Oh *stop*," Marianne said suddenly, throwing her tangled hair back and hunching forward a little, "Who do you think you are, the Grand Inquisitor?"

Hugh raised his head and scrutinized her in her corner. "Oh, you're farther off than any of us," he said, still without malice. Marianne lowered her eyes again, her lower lip thrust out.

"Who are thee-ese that come to the sacrifice," said Don, who had been studying for his Keats exam.

"Why do you say *us*, Hugh," Stu asked, sitting up in his bed. Hugh ran his finger over the comb in his pocket, making a tiny subtle rasp that Marianne remembered as a typical habit that had somehow pleased her. Stu reached under his pillow and pulled out a key with only the stub left. "See this? It's the key to my psychoneuroses . . ."

But he was interrupted again. "I'm tired, frankly. I have to get up in 1958." Hugh said, "May I have a cigarette?"

"Yes, but no light," said Stu, giving him a cigarette and then lighting it for him. "There's no use talking about it, there's nothing to be done. No positive urge. Let's all just accept the universe. Do you want the last word? You always do. Well, what is it?"

"Goodnight," said Hugh, then he rose to his feet and shuffled to the trap-door quietly and quickly. Race Newton rose too and turned and made his one remark of the evening, his eyes yellowish

and bland and his voice hollow and slightly British, in perfect imitation of a professor they all knew. "The trouble with the young men of today is that they cawn't keep their secrets." Everyone laughed, and, his face still expressionless, he followed Hugh down through the opening. Presently they all heard the door downstairs open and close softly.

"Well," said Stu, in a much louder, clearer voice, "maybe now's the time for understanding. I think he's burning up inside. Afraid to come out. I thought he would have broken down and cried if he didn't do anything else." He waited for a response, received none. "I thought we all felt the same about Hugh," he added, laughing nervously, with an air of trying to save himself at the last minute.

Don finally said, "So that was Hugh—I never really knew him. I'm amazed. What I'm amazed at is the way I feel. The only sane man among us, I used to think. But you're wrong about him, Hughie doesn't cry. No apologies for anything. 'I don't talk to anyone because no one understands me,' he said to me. 'Food isn't important, I'll get that when I have to. And sex, well . . .!'"

"When I can get it," broke in Stu, "But I like to read law cases, or even the dictionary. It's boring, but I like that kind of boredom."

Marianne broke in militantly, "It wasn't to your advantage that you were able to discomfort him."

"The less *you* say, the better," Stu said. "After all, we were trying to do you a favor—of some kind."

"Yes, you sit there silent as on a peak in Darien," said Don, a little more gently, "and we'll do the talking."

"He took my last cigarette, the bastard," Stu discovered.

"He's probably in Hayes-Bick, eating the last two dropped eggs," said Don.

It was near midnight.

This thought made Marianne hopeful. "Let's go over there," she said, and Stu got out of his bed, fully dressed, to go with them as they went down through the trap door.

On their way downstairs they passed the door of a graduate student known for carrying on cosmic conversations until late in the morning with a platonic blond friend named Lois, who lisped. As they went by they could hear her inside saying something in an anxious voice about "denying the univerth."

"God that Arthur Clark keeps weird hours," Stu said, loud enough to be heard by them on the other side of the door, but the three of them ran into the street just as they heard his footsteps.

Hayes-Bickford was deserted, and they sat down in the middle of the white tiled room, surrounded by empty chairs and tables, and began to discuss Hugh again.

"He sets himself up as something there's no such thing as, and he does it so well it hurts," said Don. "I used to feel sorry for him, and then I began to feel sorry for myself. I'd be sitting at my desk in my room and I'd hear him coming and I'd grab a book and a pencil and start marking things and I'd say to him, 'Hey, this is good.' Of course, I didn't tell him what it was. He has quite a following, you know. The rumor went around that he was setting himself up a reading course starting with the Greeks and ending with Ossian. Pretty soon there was a whole bunch of undergrads all reading Greek and trying to find out what his next project was."

Stu went on, "Remember when he was going around with that figure skater in Boston Garden? She did it with everyone, even Hugh. It was all she did, for God's sake. After a while she dropped him hard, and he hasn't stopped talking about it yet. Now what would he be doing with a woman like that?"

"Oh, Margo," said Don. "Yeh, she made a noise around the boys. But he never got to first base with her. What I don't know is why she went out with him. He told me he'd never get near another woman." They both looked at Marianne.

"Don't worry, fellers, nobody's done me wrong and they're not gonna," she said, in a hillbilly voice.

"Well, we knew he did you wrong, but not that way," said Don, and both boys laughed nastily.

"Let's talk about Marianne," said Stu.

Don's voice was cautious. "Well, here she is, the lovely product of a neatly successful country club setup in a little Connecticut town. She went to a quiet, small ladies' college in New York State and got all A's in Phil. 1, Soc. 2, and Am. Lit. 3. All of a sudden she lands here—think of it—and falls in with the Odd Lot—you, Hughie, me—why? It's rebellion, that's what it is. Rebellion against tyrants and obedience to Marianne."

Stu's glasses flashed as he lit a cigarette, though it wasn't allowed. "Now just look at all these displaced people who come here to the graduate school. So many of them become the victims of what I call Bromide Insanity. It's the result of learning too many things, many of which conflict violently. I was reading about it this afternoon, yeh."

Don, suspicious of Stu's tone of double entendre, glanced at Marianne to see if she had found herself in his monologue. "Am I green, or am I just sitting here?"

"You're just sitting here." Stu went on, "There are all kinds of people in nuthouses from this sort of thing, and my theory is that ninety percent of them are from Graduate Schools. You get to be nothing but a bunch of quotes, all warring with each other. And the whole business is caused by a few little devils planted here

and there, like Hugh, who feed the flocks and just get them to go around quoting things to each other. They don't get caught, they just stay out in front, leading them all along and then ducking just as everyone else goes off gibbering over the edge of a cliff. These quotes are their only security, and if you remove the sources of them or try to stop them from quoting, it's like trying to stop them from breathing."

"What has all this got to do with me," asked Marianne, feeling herself impugned and defying him to be more explicit.

"Oh, you're just sitting here too," said Stu warily. Then he looked at his watch. "God, it's two A.M.!" and he stood up suddenly, and said to Marianne, "If you're going to lead us home, you'd better start walking." They all went out. "I'll walk you two as far as the square, and after that it's your business."

The three of them walked in single file along the street, with Marianne up ahead. She heard Don say, "Think how hard it must be to be a woman, you have to watch out for the development of your own character as well as everyone else's." She was about to turn around and say, with womanly amusement, "Oh come, boys, what's that got to do with you," but she stopped, thinking, what's it got to do with me, either. Then they began to talk about Hugh again, Stu saying something about "seeing things in black and white, while everyone else is talking about colors." "I wouldn't want to be him," Stu concluded. Don came up close behind her. "Neither would I, except for certain reasons." With that Stu waved at them and started back the other way.

The sharp wind blew Don's hair in his eyes and he turned and looked at a brick wall on which was written, "Orpheus loves Eurydice," in big chalk letters. He pointed it out to Marianne. "Typical college humor," he said. "It appears in this same place every year early in the spring."

As they came nearer and nearer to Marianne's door the heavy sick feeling that had been with her ever since she came to the large grey shutterless Victorian house last fall began to descend on her and surround her, and she almost moaned aloud. The house seemed covered with windows, and at night a neon streetlight gave it a greenish glow in any weather, but at all hours it seemed dark inside. The accumulation of hours sitting under the student lamp and smelling the combination of grape juice and sour milk that went through her room from the window where she kept her breakfast, while she thought about Hugh instead of reading, had given her a disease she was sure she would never be rid of.

As they stopped in front of her door she shrugged, threw up her hands and exclaimed, "I think life is nasty, brutish, short, and dull. Why did he get mixed up with that Margo girl, and why did

he go out with me, for that matter? What is there between men and women, anyway?"

Don stood and looked at her, working up her anticipation for his answer, although she was sure he didn't have it yet. Finally he took hold of both her hands and said, deepening his voice, "Nature is blind, but her creator is not." Then he turned away and walked down the street. He called back over his shoulder, "See you tomorrow at eight, in front of the library." He paused, half-turned, for her answer.

"All right," she said, surprised and taken off her guard. Actually she had planned to go to a movie with a sad little American Lit. grad student named Laura, but she had often cancelled such plans in the case of sudden dates like this one. Besides, the terrible feeling had suddenly begun to leave her.

She went up the blue-carpeted stairs and turned on the 60-watt bulb on her desk. Her landlady objected to a higher wattage. There was a charcoal sketch in back of the lamp that she had done of Hugh's profile, from memory, and she took it down now and put it away in the bottom drawer of the desk. On the back of it she had written, "*Je plains de mon sort moins que tu ne pense.*"

As she lay in bed she visualized Don's face and tried to imagine his lips and his glasses as not quite so thick. Glasses are a form of mother protest, she said to herself mechanically; remember what happened to Oedipus Rex. Who had told her that? Hugh, probably. She checked back through the evening and tried to remember if Don had said anything she'd liked. She remembered the quotes from Keats, but his last remark she hadn't been able to place.

At first it had given her a fraudulent feeling to go around quoting everyone else's great words, but the greatness you pick up everywhere is a tribute to your own wave lengths, and truth is where you find it, she reminded herself. She'd read this in some Broadway play; she couldn't remember the name of it. Old Stu—he was just jealous because he didn't know any quotes. He'd majored in Math. and Psychology. And Don—there was enough about him to keep her interested for a while, at least she hoped there was. She shut her eyes tightly and began saying to herself, over and over, "Nature is blind but her creator is not; nature is blind but . . ." until she fell asleep, just as the morning light shone orange across the river and came through her window.

In Review

Poets of Today, V. Ed. by John Hall Wheelock. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958. \$3.95. Poems by O. B. Hardison, Jr., Kenneth Pitchford, and Sheila Pritchard. The reviewer teaches English at Duke University.

This, the fifth volume of Scribner's *Poets of Today*, like its predecessors, presents three American poets, O. B. Hardison, Jr., Kenneth Pitchford, and Sheila Pritchard, none of whom have previously known wide publication. For over a decade Scribners had been successful in finding poetic talent in contemporary America for these collections. If none of these be Eliots or Frosts, they have been, for the most part, talented poets writing in the present difficult era, and they deserve an appreciative audience.

The introductory essay in this volume by John Hall Wheelock entitled "On a Certain Resistance" is a carefully written study concerning the differences between the function of the poet and the function of the scientist. Mr. Wheelock writes directly and perceptively on a timely topic.

O. B. Hardison, Jr., the first of the poets included here, teaches in the University of North Carolina, where, during his undergraduate days, he helped found and edit the little magazine, *Factotum*. Mr. Hardison, more so than the other poets in this volume, is a poet concerned with ideas. Often his perceptive eye is turned toward modern society which he criticizes judiciously and honestly. This contemporary criticism is represented in such poems as "Intersection" and "The New Prosperity." In the later poem, concerning the economic philosophy of modern man, he writes:

As long as goods are flimsy, we are sound.

No hundred-year conveyances we build;
Old cars, like spavined horses, should be killed. . . .

O spirit of Adam Smith be with us yet

Lest we remember when we should forget.

As Mr. Wheelock quotes Hardison in the introductory essay: "The subject matter of poetry is not man or nature but always and inevitably is *value*. Poetry may be defined as a commentary on value." In most of Mr. Hardison's poems he concerns himself with finding value and truth, and fortunately he has a philosophical mind coupled with a poetic talent, a combination which permits him to seek truth and to present his findings profoundly and artistically.

If a serious criticism is to be waged against Mr. Hardison, it is a criticism for a coldness of emotion. Often when the reader expects the poet to issue a strong charge of feeling, he is disappointed by a certain restraint of emotion. This is the case with the poem "Elegy for a Suicide" and with the series of religious poems.

If Mr. Hardison is the poet of value and truth, certainly Kenneth Pitchford, the second poet included here, is the poet consummate in the skill of presenting aural quality in his poems. The sheer aural beauty which he achieves is such that many of our better-known poets might take note.

"We name each bird, and talk
of purple plum and broom."
"Walk in the Garden"

It is unfair, however, to limit Mr. Pitchford's merits as a poet to an ability to create aural beauty, for indeed his poetry contains more. As Mr. Wheelock points out in his essay, Pitchford's best poetry is that which combines both music and intellect. Such a poem is "The Sirens," which is certainly as musical in quality as it is profound in thought.

Sheila Pritchard, the only woman of the three poets in this volume, is by far the most experimental of the group. Mr. Wheelock likens her method to that of "pointilliste impressionism, where an almost kaleidoscopic welter of

detail somehow adds up to a vivid and total picture." Though many of her poems are fresh and clear in their originality, others are often dense and obscure; however, certain of her poems achieve a high plateau of poetic creation and reflect a worthy talent. "By Dark" is a poem worth singling out.

Certainly each of the poets included in *Poets of Today V* has his individual faults, but each has merits worthy of more than a precursory perusal. The volume is well worth the attention of poetry lovers who find satisfaction in studying good examples of the types of verse creations that are now being accomplished in America. It is a pity that the series is limited to three poets per issue. One is prone to believe that fatter volumes could be filled with young talents, many of whom have as yet had no nationwide or commercial-press recognition.

Donald H. Craver

Higher Education in Transition, by John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958. \$7.50. The reviewer was editor of the *Carolina Quarterly* last year.

This is history written from the point of view of present problems. In the words of the authors, themselves: "Whatever magnitude the problems of higher education have reached in the past, they may well be dwarfed by those of the future. To meet these problems, it seems to the present authors of the utmost importance to establish some over-all historical perspective without delay. Like physicians, educators can hardly prescribe a therapy for the maladies of higher education unless they have a clinical record of their patient's past." But much more than a chronological "clinical record" it is a historical synthesis, analyzing and defining trends and movements, which brings order to the past and illumination to the future. In effecting this synthesis the authors have done impressive research and sifting of masses

of materials, such as college records and reports, letters, speeches, monographic studies of particular objects, and histories of individual institutions.

This history of higher education becomes, with the insight and perception of its authors, an intellectual and social history of the United States. Any reader interested in the American mind, its past and its future, will find this work a significant one. As an example of this broad view: the authors describe the impact of the German university concept on American institutions of higher learning during the last quarter of the 19th century. The concept saw the concern of a university to be primarily that of research and creation of knowledge, not involvement with student and campus activities. Accompanying this educational influence was the much broader intellectual movement, a part of the "New Science," which stated, with a German accent, that knowledge must be detached, unbiased, unclouded by the attitudes and prejudices of the researcher—"scientific."

In the view of Professors Brubacher and Rudy, the central intellectual current in the history of American higher education is the continuing struggle between two divergent philosophies of education, between the intellectual on the one hand and the practical on the other. The defenders of the former view dominated the colonial college with the classical or humanistic curriculum, consisting of the traditional Greek, Latin and mathematics. By the end of the 18th century, with the Enlightenment, a fissure within liberal education began to become apparent, which found embodiment in such new institutions as Jefferson's University of Virginia. These new institutions, reinforced during the 19th century with the rise of science and industrialism, aimed at offering a higher education practical and valuable for the individual here and now. The classical curriculum took refuge in faculty psychology and mental discipline, and in the worship of traditional values. By the beginning of the 20th century, the

practical approach had been provided a philosophical foundation in the pragmatism of James and Dewey, which insisted that education must be fitted to the individual and to the demands of his particular time and place. But the classical conception was to find able defenders such as Hutchins and Adler, whose point of departure was Hutchins' famous syllogism, "Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education should be everywhere the same." This sweeping absolute led logically to the "storehouse of knowledge" and the "great books," for the content of the liberal arts.

The chasm between the two philosophies today is as wide as ever. In spite of notable efforts to find a formula for reconciliation, the authors remark "Trying to weave such incompatible strands of doctrine together balked any idea of real synthesis. The best that could result was an eclecticism and a rather contradictory one at that. It was probably of most significance at mid-20th century that in one way or another many people were seeking a 'both/and' rather than an 'either/or' answer to the philosophical problems of higher education."

The criticism, which education has undergone during this past post-Sputnik year from, among others, certain admirals and historians, though it is criticism which indicates doubtful understanding of the philosophical problems generally, has direct bearing on the controversy between the classic and the pragmatic views. These recent criers-out who demand absolute selectivity and open separation in the secondary schools on the basis of superior intellectual ability, propose a higher education limited presumably to an intellectual elite. They are opposed to that view of higher education which demands education for the many and which insists that the individual be free to determine his own academic boundaries. The force of this historical study is to the point that the triumph of American higher education has been

its democracy and responsiveness to change. Perhaps these current criticisms can be accepted, adjusted and turned to future success in the development of the institution of higher education.

Christian Lefebvre

Prismatic Voices, an International Anthology of Distinctive New Poets. Ed. by C. A. Muses. Indian Hills, Colorado: Falcon's Wing Press, 1959. \$4.00. The reviewer was editor of *Iconograph* (1940-47) and is a poet in his own right.

Prismatic Voices, something new as anthologies go, poses a problem to the critic attempting to evaluate it. Though calculated, one gathers, for an English-speaking audience, it is not totally available except to those who read French, Spanish, German, and Italian as well—languages in which a large number of the poems are written. The reviewer in this instance does read these languages, but not, he fears, sufficiently well to get the full load from poetry written in some of them. Indeed, it is unlikely that any one person would ever be found who knows all of these languages native-well. I am grateful for the dedicated translator who is able to relay into English of our time the German, Spanish, or Italian, knowing, as it were, the landscape of the very province of the poet's life. Translations by such competent men as D. M. Pettinella, or Charles Guenther, or the recent brilliant Hays translation of the poems of Jimenez, or Fowlie's fine translations of contemporary French poets are front rank. I am not sure but that an international anthology such as the one under consideration would be better in one language, using the best available translations, which are often quite as available to the smaller press as to the larger ones as proved by D. Vincent Smith's admirable *Exile* collection (Olivant Press) which appeared last year. It seems to me that the purpose of all this is to prove a sort of spiritual kinship between a certain

number of poets of very different national, personal, and racial backgrounds, and by implication, the existence of an international literary spirit. The group for which such an anthology would prove most valuable may well not be linguists enough to cope with five languages successfully.

But the positive aspects of such a publication should not be underestimated. Composed of generous selections (an average of thirty-five pages per poet) from the work of nineteen not too widely known poets of real quality, the anthology becomes a genuine supplement to the literary fare of the year, offering to many people perhaps a first taste of the work of such excellent poets as Alfred Dorn, Claudia Lars, Ewart Milne, George Abbe, Lawrence Lipton, Olga Papastamou, and William Pillin. In so far as so many of the anthologies prepared by University Presses and the New York book trade do not seem to have room for anything but long established reputations, the function of the little press's anthology such as this one is not to be undervalued. It is the opinion of the reviewer that *Prismatic Voices* and *Exile* represent some of the major editorial effort of the times. Though temperamentally different one from the other, both of these anthologies are, I feel, permanent contributions to the American literary scene. Unlike *Exile*, however, which seemed more prone to value the poetically inventive, *Prismatic Voices* is a collection of some of the more lyric voices of the generation.

The individual evaluation of the weight, virtues, and defects of a group of poets of this calibre would take more space than that allotted the reviewer in this instance; but the advantage, particularly in the case of the less widely published poet, of having in an anthology a bite of his work large enough to give a taste of the flavor of his art is a very forward step in anthology making—one for which the editors of *Prismatic Voices* are to be complimented and one which could be followed to advantage more often.

As compared to the group of poets

which appear in the Scribner's series, *Poets of Today* (latest one reviewed above), one feels somehow, particularly if one is at a focus in the internal literary machinery of the country, that the range of the smaller press has been more healthily catholic. One suspects that perhaps these are the real seeding grounds for the major poets of tomorrow. One has very much the impression that not only have the poets in such a collection hairs on their chest (as for that matter, of course, even the Scribner's poets show them boldly and openly), but that these are indeed poets who have not been either mentally or actually emasculated by the pressures of impending history. One finds the real folk echoes of polyglot America in anthologies like *Exile* and *Prismatic Voices*, while one wonders if the rustic echoes in some of the collections offered by the New York publishers are not a little ersatz, like sets prepared for some TV show or woman's magazine.

Somehow for the reviewer, the simple presentation of a volume of dedicated poets is an exciting thing all too uncommon. Olivant Press's *Exile* and Falcon's Wing Press's *Prismatic Voices* as far as I am concerned are eloquent proofs of the vital importance of the little literary press and magazine in our time.

Kenneth Lawrence Beaudoin

Stanford Short Stories 1958. Ed. by Wallace Stegner and Richard Scowcroft. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1958. \$2.95. The reviewer is a graduate student in English at the University of North Carolina.

This book is the twelfth in a series of collections of the outstanding short stories done during the year by students affiliated with Stanford University. This year's volume contains the work of nine writers; thirteen stories in all, seven of which have been previously published.

On being introduced to a volume of thirteen short stories all written by the

students of one university within one year, our immediate reaction is to salute rather grandly such an accomplishment. Of the many manuscripts that are received by the magazine in which this review is appearing, less than ten per cent are submitted by students of the sponsoring university, and only approximately one-tenth of these are suitable for publication. And though the percentage of affiliated student material submitted may be higher at other universities that have the interest to sponsor a little magazine, it is safe to say that, with very few exceptions, a volume of student stories of some literary quality written within the year would be an impossibility.

The success of the Stanford group in comparison with the student writers at other universities is not due, however, to the possibility that the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne have moved to the west coast, or any other such mystical regional explanation. Instead, an explanation begins in the fact that the Stanford University Writing Center is a demanding, well defined part of the English department of that school, alive, respected, and interested in growing. It is not just the token concession made by many English departments to the vague feeling that something should be done to encourage students interested in the creation of literature. I know, of course, that it is apparent that Stanford University, at least in this sphere of activity, seems to have funds that are simply not available to most universities; yet all is not money, and though rare, energy and enthusiasm still come without cost. And if the funds of a university are at such a state that absolutely no more than the before mentioned token concession can be made, wouldn't it be better to use the money in another way within the English department rather than employ it for the half-hearted, perhaps injudicious encouragement of a handful of interested and semi-interested students?

Since it appears to me that the prime reason for publishing these volumes is

as a testament to the Stanford University Writing Center, I think it not out of place in a review of this book to say a few words about this Center. Stanford has been running a coherent program in creative writing since 1946. Relatively generous fellowships, scholarships, and prizes supplementing the clear-eyed direction and encouragement of Wallace Stegner and Richard Scowcroft for Fiction, Yvor Winters for Poetry, and Norman Philbrick for Playwriting—attract students from all over the world. (In the 1958 volume authors from both Australia and South Africa are represented.) Periodically, visitors such as Katherine Anne Porter, Malcolm Cowley, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Frank O'Connor, C. P. Snow, and Hortense Calisher add their energies to the program. Though I am sure that Stanford has its share of the undergraduate of the far-away look and mental manuscript, all those that wish to work toward an M.A. in creative writing must display work of professional competence before being admitted to candidacy. Some indication of success of the program, over and above this volume being reviewed, is the fascinating fact that three ex-students of the Stanford Center (Burdich, Connell, and White) are on the current best seller list at the same time.

Of the stories themselves, we are at once tempted to look for indications of the guiding hand of Messrs. Stegner and Scowcroft evidenced throughout the collection, or at least for some trait that would disclose a common ground from which the stories grew, but there is no such quality evident. That is save the quality in each case of mastery over the material, themes individual to the author, and correct grammar and punctuation. The two stories each of Peter Shrubbs and Robin White are in general the superior stories of the magazine; although the tale of David Dow, despite certain roughnesses and its "strangely enough on precisely the same day" ending, is easily the most memorable of the book. Lee Truax's story of a negro soldier in Germany is a moving one, much in the Richard

Wrightian manner of social protest, though not so violently bitter. Donald Moser's two stories do not approach the standard he set for his work with his *Harper's Magazine* story, "Evening Flight." The remaining five stories, two by Dan Jacobson and one each by Joanne De Eds, Edith Weinburg, and James L. Spencer, are but a little below those mentioned above.

It is doubtful if these volumes will gain much circulation outside of that group that has a special interest in creative writing classes, but from these people both the budding capabilities of the writers represented and the energies of the Stanford instructors will no doubt receive praise.

Warren Heemann

Reflections on Art, A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers. Ed. by Susanne K. Langer. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958. \$6.50. The reviewer is the poetry editor of the *Carolina Quarterly*.

Mrs. Langer's newest book follows by some five years her valuable study of the arts *Feeling and Form*, and is designed to provide both background and substance to the theory of art she proposed in that book. Of the two criteria applied to selecting these writings, at least one of them is that all the essays "... either expound or tacitly assume two basic concepts: the concept of expressiveness ... and the concept of 'semblance' ... which defines the work of art as a wholly created appearance, the Art Symbol. Their explicit acceptance of these basic concepts, and especially their constant use of them in handling problems of artistic meaning, structure, aesthetic versus nonaesthetic values, distance, talent, technique, and many other subjects, seem to me the surest corroboration for the philosophy of art I have tried to build on these same fundamental ideas." In short, the authors presented in this anthology seem to have been successful in applying these

concepts to the reality of the art work and the art experience. And, for Mrs. Langer, the insight to be derived from the application of a theory of art to art itself both constitutes and justifies the validity of such a theory.

Besides being a corroboration for Mrs. Langer's art theory, this selection also brings to light a great many writings which first appeared in publications now unavailable except in top research libraries, but which, nevertheless, are of considerable interest and value regardless whether one is in sympathy with Mrs. Langer's theoretical endeavor or not. Of the twenty-six essays, at least nine are translated from the German and French. The others are taken from such magazines as *Poet Lore*, *Perspecta*, *Partisan Review*, *Journal of Aesthetics*, and *Art Criticism*, and the *Journal of Phenomenology*.

For those interested in following up Mrs. Langer's theory of art, the opening essay of the book, Virgil Aldrich's "Beauty as Feeling" is insightful and important. So is the following essay, Otto Baensch's "Art and Feeling," which, in spite of its academic tone, is significant in attempting to relate the object-subject relation (especially in terms of feeling) to the whole area of art experience. Raymond Bayer's essay "The Essence of Rhythm," which first appeared in the *Revue d'Esthétique*, develops the notion of rhythm as the essence of art, a concept that Mrs. Langer left unfinished in *Feeling and Form* where she tentatively suggested that there could be widespread and fundamental isomorphisms between the rhythms of art and the rhythms of biological life.

Mrs. Langer's selection has favored music above all the other arts in the number of articles present in this book. She does not justify this in her introduction, but only states: "There has been no attempt to balance the several arts against each other. If most of the analytic thinking is found in music, well and good. ..." Though I am somewhat doubtful about her latter statement, it would seem that music in particular is her interest because of

its innate mystery and resistance to penetrating analysis in the history of aesthetics. Of the eight essays on music, Gabriel Marcel's "Bergsonism and Music," Helmut Reinold's "On the Problem of Musical Hearing," and Gisele Brelet's "Music and Silence" are perhaps the most thought-provoking.

Two essays, Louis Reid's "Beauty and Significance" and Lucius Garvin's "The Paradox of Aesthetic Meaning," develop each a means by which the importance of the expressiveness of art can be evaluated and understood in terms of meaning. There are, however, some writings included in this volume that are confined to the analysis of a particular problem within a particular art form, such as Malraux's brilliant "Sketch for a Psychology of the Moving Pictures" and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's "Problems of a Song-Writer." But even in these, the larger perspective of a concept of art as an encompassing form of expression is never lost sight of.

This book should be, therefore, invaluable to those who are concerned with coming to terms with some kind of understanding of the nature of art. All of the essays in this collection are consistently incisive and meaningful, whether they deal with art as a whole or in the particular. Perhaps the greatest merit of these essays is their intent of staying close to the concrete phenomena of art whenever the problems of art are abstract, and being purposely abstract whenever there is a possibility to explore the generality of a particular insight.

Arthur Lessing



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ABOUT THE COVER

The cover for this issue of *The Carolina Quarterly* was drawn by Art Anderson, an Art student at the University of North Carolina. Mr. Anderson is from New Bern, N. C.

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The Carolina Quarterly

announces the

Ninth Annual Fiction and Poetry Award Winners

Best short story to be published this year in *The Carolina Quarterly* (\$100).

to Ralph Dennis for "The Hurt Dachshund"

Runners up:

Jacob Fisher for "Inky"

Robert A. Wiggins for "The Suitcase and the Mystic"

Best poem to be published this year in *The Carolina Quarterly* (\$50) to Joanne de Longchamps of Reno Nevada, for:
"In Metaphor of Sea" which appeared in the Winter issue of this year's Quarterly.

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The Hurt Dachshund

The houses all looked alike. It was an odd kind of place, the Crescent Housing Development. The trees there had no age; Ben noticed that first of all. Pine saplings grew along the sides of the streets, and an occasional holly, transplanted perhaps a week before, withered and went lifeless in the bruising cold. The December wind passed without obstacle across the bare lawns and down the level streets. The streets were mixed up and curved often so that sometimes he faced into the wind and at other times the wind was behind him, loud in his ears.

It was the 18th of December and his first day of work as a substitute postman. He would have preferred the familiar streets of the town, but that's the way it was. Five miles out of town where all the houses seemed to have been stamped out of the same toy mold. Several times, entering a new street he felt that he had already been there. He felt that he was in a labyrinth, but without the thread to lead him out. And without the Medea, the young passionate one. Ann had the Silver Thread and she was no young, no devoted Medea. The older Medea that kills my children, that's what she was. Even before there were any children. He snorted and eased the leather strap on his shoulder. That's the chancre in the rose, the rot.

The regular carrier, Charlie, accompanied him on the route the first day. He had tanned deeply in the summer sun, but now the icy wind reacted against the tan. There was a blueness, a sickness in his color. He was incredibly thin. The wind made him press for each step as he advanced against it. When the wind was behind him he lunged forward like a gooney bird threatening flight. Perhaps the twenty-five pound pouch usually anchored him. Walking beside Ben who carried the pouch, he gestured toward the houses and threw his head from side to side to look into the picture windows.

I don't have a gesture left.

"You're older than most of the college boys we get during Christmas," Charlie said.

"Yes," Ben said, "I did time in the Chinese Navy."

Charlie laughed and turned to him as if to say more, but Ben walked away from him.

RALPH DENNIS published a short story in *The Carolina Quarterly* several years ago. Mr. Dennis lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Dogs trotted out to meet Charlie; they came with their heads raised and their tails wagging.

"I get to know them," Charlie said. "It saves getting bit." He bent down to stroke a terrier, then straightened up and pointed toward the next house.

Charlie spat down into the street. "She's one of the pesky ones, Mrs. Holstetter. She caught me on her grass and called the post-master."

"You mean this?" Ben asked, kicking out with his foot to break off the tops of some of the grass. It was like breaking off icicles.

"She calls it grass," Charlie said, "and I don't argue none."

They walked down into the street, avoiding the lawn, and followed carefully the stone path up to the door. Ben pulled out the handful of Christmas cards and dropped them one by one through the slot in the mailbox. He was down to the last three cards when, to his left, he heard the sudden sharp bark of the terrier and the breaking of grass. He stuffed the last three in before he turned. At first he was not sure what the terrier was barking at; then his eyes focused and he saw that a dachshund lay stretched out on the lawn. The hind legs stretched out stiffly behind him, and he moved forward, pulling with his front paws.

The terrier ran toward the dachshund and barked. He backed away growling and darted to the side of the dachshund. Twisting slowly, painfully, the dachshund turned its body to face the terrier.

Charlie stood at the edge of the stone walk. He waved the back of his hand at the terrier and shouted, "Trixie! Get away from him! Dammit, I said to get!" He balled his hand into a fist and shook it at the dog. "Get!"

Ben went past Charlie onto the lawn and stopped beside the dachshund. The terrier backed away and stopped in the center of the street. At the sound of the grass breaking under Ben's foot, the dachshund strained to face him. Wet, glazed eyes turned up to him. Ben stepped to the side and the dachshund twisted to face him, but not quickly enough. He saw the bloody forelegs where the skin had scraped away in the crawling. In the dragging, turning motion of the dachshund the weight was shifted so that he saw the thin hair of the belly and the blood drying and caking.

"My God, Charlie, what happened to him?"

"She . . ." Charlie gestured toward the house . . . "backed over him one day."

"Didn't they try to do anything for him?"

"Sure they did," Charlie said, "but it's the spine." He followed the walk down to the street. The terrier backed away.

Ben stood looking down. He thought of the acute pain and the silence except for the grass breaking under the paws and the breathing.

"Come on," Charlie said, "we got mail to deliver."

Charlie reached down and pulled the ears of the terrier.

Ben slept in a large, high-ceilinged room which could not be properly heated. He left the window at the foot of his bed open to the easy noise of the oak creaking beyond the porch and the sidewalk. The wind prompted him to draw his knees up against his chest and to lie with only his nose and eyes above the blankets. Each morning he awoke to the scent of woodsmoke circling in the street and spread his arms for Ann. For there was woodsmoke in the blanket Ann lay on. And afterwards he had always flattened his nose against the blanket, listening to her cry, always cry. Sometimes he even threw rocks at the trees to hear the birds fly away and up, outlined for an instant against the moon. But she always cried like she couldn't breathe.

The pillow smelled of sweat and the image would not solidify out of the jumble of eyes, nose, mouth, breasts, thighs. He had been dreaming again, the sweat. He did not remember the dreams too well; he tried to tell himself that he did not dream, but there was one dream, with variations, in which she became uglier and uglier and uglier as they touched. And touched. He always awoke from the dream trembling and afraid to sleep.

With the pillow folded behind his head he could see in the first gray tinge the thick ropes of smoke that swung out of the chimneys. Some mornings his sister had to call him twice to breakfast because he wanted nothing else but to sit, half-raised, and watch the wind scatter the smoke down the sharp angles of the roofs. The acid of the woodsmoke followed him the two blocks to the service station where he waited for the mail truck. But the woodsmoke got mixed up with the perfume of a girl who waited on the same corner for her ride downtown. The second morning she stopped in front of him with an unlit cigarette in her upraised hand. He'd said, "No, I don't have a light," even before she spoke, although he carried both a lighter and matches. He blew a puff of smoke from the corner of his mouth, and she'd looked angry and confused. The next morning she didn't notice him and he didn't really mind.

After the first day Charlie left him and delivered the heavy packages in a truck. So there was no one to talk to. Charlie left him at the starting point with a full pouch twice a day. Three hours later, deep in thought, he found himself at the pickup point with the empty pouch light against his hip. Twice a day he saw the dachshund.

The fourth morning he carried a small registered package to the Holstetter house along with the mail. The dachshund was on the front lawn, squirming to face him. When he was closer he saw the new blood caked where the old had scraped away. The hair at the belly was darker and the eyes were wetter, cloudier.

He left the walk and leaned down to run his hands over the head and ears. The dachshund lifted his front paws and tried to turn onto his back.

He jerked back his hands. "No . . . dammit . . . no." He walked away without looking back.

He rang the doorbell. Behind him he heard the dachshund breaking the grass with the flailing of his paws.

"Yes?" Mrs. Holstetter partly opened the door, looked out, and swung the door wide.

"Registered mail," he said, holding up the package and a few Christmas cards.

She signed the receipt book and returned it to him.

"That's a pretty dachshund you have there," he said, as he buttoned the receipt book into his shirt pocket.

"Yes, we think so," she said abstractly as she shook the package near her ear; then frowning she slipped it into a pocket of her robe. She took a cigarette from the other pocket and waited while he nervously struck a match and shielded it. Warm air passed out of the house and carried with it the underarm sleep odor.

No woodsmoke.

He waved the match until the flame went out. "It's too bad he got hurt."

"Yes, we liked him much better when he could run around. He was the happiest puppy you've ever seen." She leaned against the doorjam, puffing at the cigarette and blowing the first smoke toward him.

"He's a real pretty dog. I'll bet he was friendly . . . not saying he's not friendly now . . . though it must hurt him a lot." He tugged at the leather strap until the ends of the letters fanned out. "It's too bad the doctors couldn't do anything for him."

"We went to a lot of expense," she said. "Tom . . . that's my husband . . . must have spent two hundred dollars trying to get him cured."

He looked at the burnt, twisted match. "The spine's real delicate," he said.

"He's much better now. Yesterday he dug up a mole."

"It must be cold out here," he said.

"He won't stay in the house. He keeps crawling to the door, and we have to let him out." She flicked a long ash from her cigarette that fell on his shoe.

"If I had a dog like that . . ."

"It's not as if he couldn't do anything at all," Mrs. Holstetter said. "He must have played with that mole a whole hour. You know, from one paw to the other, like a cat."

Ben broke the match and threw it down in the grass. "I think if I had a dog like that I wouldn't let him suffer." He looked down

until he could see the black head of the match. "I wouldn't treat him this way."

"Now look," she said. She reached back and grabbed the door knob.

"It's none of my business." He backed away and started down the steps backwards.

"You're damn right it's none of your business." She stepped back and began to close the door.

"He must be hurting like all hell," Ben said. His throat tightened so that he could not swallow.

"What do you know about the way he feels? Who are you, some Jesus Christ who knows how everything feels?"

"I said it was none of my business."

"You just deliver the mail." She slammed the door and he heard the lock click.

As he went down the path, the dachshund lifted his paws to him. The grass broke under his flailing. Ben could here the individual stalks break.

Christmas Eve Ben went downtown after supper. He didn't know anyone and no one spoke to him. Still, he wasn't hurt. He only wondered at the number of strangers. The loneliness he might have felt a year ago, that would have shown on his face, was accepted as a scar is accepted: at first with a hand covering it, and later bared so that it fades into the surrounding skin. He didn't really want to talk to anyone.

Christmas was only hours away and the banners the Junior League had stretched across Main Street flaked away, letter by letter. Strings of colored lights swung from lamp post to lamp post. The department stores played carols over their public address systems all night. Hands deep in his topcoat pockets, he stood under the awnings, looking at the toys and listening to the bits and scraps of music that passed out of the stores when the doors opened. He was restless and nervous and the slow wind seemed to circle him. He walked away. The movie theater had brought back "White Christmas," and a twisted line formed along the neighboring buildings for the late showing. When he walked from under the marquee a slow cold rain was falling. There was a flurry in the line as the people pressed closer to the walls.

Arching his head he could see the small points of rain coming closer and closer after they passed into the reach of the streetlamps, getting larger and larger before they broke against his face. He reached up and ruffled the collar of his topcoat.

"No rain tomorrow," he said almost as a prayer. The dachshund in the wet grass all day long.

He saw two high school girls shopping with their fat-pigeon mother. He passed them huddled under an awning. The girls had

cold faces and ice white legs. Very white under the yellow street-lights.

Cold meat doesn't melt or wash away. He laughed but it sounded like a cough full of phlegm. And all of it is cold meat, he thought.

Then the rain thickened, and the cabs honked at him. His shoes squished, and his trousers below the knee were wet and stiff. Rain soaked through his topcoat at the shoulders. So he turned off Main Street and started home. For the first block he kicked an empty candy box and the rain on the sidewalk rose like a wave before it. At the corner, waiting for the light to change, he stepped into the center of the box and heard the cardboards crumple.

The last four blocks he was indrawn. He talked to himself, but the streets were empty, except for cars, and no one heard him. Halfway through the last block he felt the first tears, self-pity and anger he knew, on his face. They were warm where the rain was cold.

Bitch Ann.

He went up the steps to his sister's house and turned around. He looked down at the dark ragged line which was the limit to which the wind had blown the rain onto the porch. He put the toes of his shoes an inch across the line. He wanted to watch the drops spatter against his shoes, but the leather was too wet and the drops were absorbed as they touched. He gave up and wiped the wet sleeve of his topcoat across his eyes. He saw the lamp burning in the hallway.

He felt better after crying, but not much better.

The last morning, Christmas. Bitter cold in the shadows. The Christmas trees lighted in the picture windows. A fat, ugly Santa Claus with a red bulb for a nose perched in the Holstetter window. The lawn was empty.

He acknowledged the bareness of the lawn at his back as if the bareness was the property of a flesh body, as if the absence of the dachshund was the absence of a hand or an arm. All he had to do, he knew, would be to close his eyes. When he opened them the dachshund would be stretched out in the same spot. The short front legs would be moving.

He left the porch and crossed the lawn to the area where the dachshund usually lay. The grass was lower, pressed down where the weight had been. But it was not a narrow depression. Rather it had the shape of a cone, as if the dachshund turned in a fixed axis. Brown rust spotted the grass.

The wind blew down the street where there were no trees to deflect it. No smoke hung in the air as it did on his street. The wind here had nothing to do with the passage of time. On his street the wind met him and passed him. Now even his breathing had nothing

to do with the passage of time, though the breathing itself was loud in the street where no children played.

He stepped into the cone and out. The grass was so stiff that he felt it through the soles of his shoes. The rain from the night before shattered as thin sheets about the single stalks he touched. Then, a movement at the corner of the house startled him.

The dachshund lay in the shadow cast by the house. The paws blurred as he pulled away from the shadow. Ben walked toward him and past him. He squatted and waited while the dachshund twisted around to face him. Pain closed his eyes as he crawled forward. He pulled forward, then shoved his paws to the side. Something struck Ben's shoe and bounded away. He found it was the stiff, soft body of a mole. The dachshund crawled on, inch by inch, passing the mole, and put his chin against Ben's shoe.

His eyes opened to the shadow, the cold light. His tongue touched the toe of Ben's shoe. Two wet lines, like glass, glinted at the corners of his eyes.

A wind that was sterile and carried no time moved around him. Not at all the kind of wind that passed him when he slept in the high-ceilinged room. But the wind that touched him during the century of pain which was the last moment of love-making (when movement hung and his heart stopped) or in a moment of anger when he lowered his eyes, was neither cold nor warm (but stone).

Ann would not understand. She was afraid of time, and once she gripped his arms as they lay side by side on the blanket and said, "We won't do this anymore. We're getting too old to act like children who have just found out something." She curled her head under her arm. "We violate each other."

He tried to tell her that there was no violation when there was no movement, no time, stopped in space, but she closed her eyes. And would not listen.

"We don't get any younger." Her eyes flickered toward her bare third finger left hand. "And we get a hell of a lot older."

"Next year," he'd said, "next year for sure."

"We could celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary in the same motel," she said, "and get a gross of protectives from the management and the phone number of an abortionist. No thanks."

"They have a new way now," he'd say, stroking her hair, "called sand-blasting, done by indigent stone-cutters." And felt her flinch. She said other things then, but he remembered them hardly at all, as if he made them up himself. "No violation, no movement," he said.

He moved to the side of the dachshund and slid his hand under the oiled hair of his neck. He stroked the throat against the grain of the hair and the eyes closed to him. Then leaning forward he placed his other hand flat against the spine and exerted all his weight

pressing the belly down into the grass. His right hand clenched at the throat and there was no cry as he tightened the muscle, drawing the head up toward him. The spine, after no time passed, popped like a knuckle. The jaw dropped convulsively into the palm of his hand. The other hand, one clean sweep down the length of the dachshund, smoothed the hair of the back and shoulders.

He straightened up. The mail pouch dragged at his shoulder. The wind moved around him and it was the clean wind of smokeless oil furnaces.

The dead mole curled near the front paws of the dachshund. He bent over and lifted it by the tail. He grunted and leaned against the side of the house. The mole spun slowly round and round as he stared at it. He tickled the paws and the mole was still. The wind circled him and he drew back his arm and threw the mole toward an open field behind the duplex. He saw it drop, tail last, into a tangle of rose bushes.

The wind circled him and he walked through it down into the road. It was the last day. The street curved in front of him and there were no trees. It was bitter cold.



Colonel Sartoris Snopes and Faulkner's Aristocrats A Note on "Barn Burning"

I

In recent years William Faulkner's "Barn Burning" has been a favorite with anthologists. It is, on the surface, an excellent story, a story of a boy who renounces his father; but critics have been wary of its deeper implications. Mr. Walter Havighurst speaks of the boy Sarty as the "most regenerate of the Snopes" and commends his "growing sense of right"; but he ignores the most formative influence on the boy imagination.¹ Sarty Snopes was born into a poverty-ridden and morally depraved family; but he was able to rise above his milieu through his admiration for the world above him, represented in this story by the families of Sartoris and DeSpain. "Barn Burning" is corroborative of the thesis, first stated by Mr. George Marion O'Donnel in 1939, that "William Faulkner is really a traditional moralist, in the best sense."² His ultimate concern in the story is not with the boy, but with an order of life that has preserved in a chaotic world a vestige of law and dignity and worth.

II

Few American novelists have written of aristocratic institutions with respect. To give a special place to tradition in a country founded upon the revolutionary principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity is going against the grain. Even in Virginia, where English institutions were most firmly established, there was after the War of Independence an evident turning away from the aristocratic concept. By the time Jefferson came to the Presidency, the English Church had lost its dominance, primogeniture had been abolished, and sentiment was growing among the enlightened leaders of the Commonwealth for the manumission of the slaves. The progress toward democracy in the South was arrested by the tragic division

¹ *Masters of the Modern Short Story: Instructor's Manual* (New York, 1955), p. 7.
² *Kenyon Review*, I (Summer, 1939), 285.

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of the country in the first half of the nineteenth century; and by 1860, the vast country lying between the Potomac and the Rio Grande had defiantly developed a social structure antipathetic to the egalitarian North. In 1865, the principles for which the South fought were repudiated on the field of battle. Were they not also discredited? The American's experience with aristocracy has for the most part been limited to the ante-bellum South, and the defeat of the Southern armies has given the word its peculiar valuation in the American context. In recent years Mr. Tennessee Williams and other writers have made wide use of the decayed mansion shrouded in live oaks and Spanish moss, but the "Southern gentleman" has found a place in American fiction only because of his abnormality as a human being. The reader does not have to be told that such is the pitiful end of an order of life founded upon wrong principles.

A generation ago William Faulkner began to write about the people of Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi. Most of the whites in Faulkner's country are poor, semi-literate, hill-country people; but there is also a sprinkling of what in former days was a thriving and dominant upper class. In the twentieth century a great many of the old names have vanished altogether, like Holston, Grenier, and Grierson; others like Sartoris and Stevens have managed to survive. In all of Faulkner's work, however, these families, even in a moribund state, are treated with a respect that American novelists seldom pay representatives of an aristocratic class.

Critics have not known what to make of Faulkner's interest in the past, for he cannot be dismissed as a romantic or sentimentalist. For the most part, they have ignored what they do not like or understand and have given their attention to his craftsmanship or symbology. Mr. Louis Kronenberger, perplexed by Faulkner's anomalous position, says that "a certain romantic streak prevents him from doing a really bang-up job on the decay of the Southern aristocracy."³ Faulkner, of course, has no interest in such a "bang-up job." He is concerned with moral ideas, not sociology; and it so happens that he finds these ideas associated with a traditional order of society.

Faulkner deals most specifically with life in the Old South in *The Unvanquished*, a book in which, says Mr. Kronenberger, he has done nothing more than "brightly varnish rotten timber."⁴ Rosa Millard holds the Sartoris plantation together while her son-in-law, Colonel John Sartoris, is away at war. She accepts the responsibilities as well as the privileges of her position in Jefferson and helps to provide for the destitute women and children in the hills and back-country. Rosa Millard is not, however, a simple glorification of Southern womanhood. To achieve her aim, she stoops to collaborate with Ab Snopes in his scheme of cheating the Yankee occupation

³ "The World of William Faulkner," *Nation*, 150 (April 13, 1940), 481.

⁴ "Faulkner's Dismal Swamp," *Nation*, 146 (February 19, 1938), 214.

army in a series of clever horse trades. She succeeds in making money, but she compromises her principles. (No Sartoris male could have done what she did; Faulkner keeps young Bayard, her grandson, nobly aloof from the chicanery.) The result is her death. *The Unvanquished* is an intricate commentary on the social system of the Old South; and though for the most part Faulkner presents the old order in a favorable light, he does not fail to point out defects. In the last section of the book, young Bayard refuses to avenge the murder of his father, "in the face of blood and raising and background,"⁵ and thus repudiates at least a part of the Sartoris code.

In all of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha work, an aristocratic order survives in some form and serves as a standard against which modern values are judged. It is least present perhaps in the stories of Frenchman's Bend, the village in the southeastern part of the county. *As I Lay Dying* is a novel about a poor degraded family at the Bend; but old Dr. Peabody, at one time the regimental surgeon of Colonel Sartoris, serves as a link between the Sartoris family and the poor-white Bundrens. Moreover, Addie Bundren, by her own request, is at last buried in the Jefferson cemetery, where stands the statue and effigy of John Sartoris. In Faulkner's recent books, the people of Frenchman's Bend have played a significant part: the Snopeses, Varners, Tulls, Bundrens, Quicks, Armstids. No gentleman lives today at the Bend; but the humble farmers and share-croppers move across a country once owned by an old French planter, whose name they have forgotten, but whose ruined mansion and terraced gardens remind them of a more spacious past. Will Varner, into whose possession the old Frenchman's place has passed, likes to sit in his special chair placed amid "the rise of old brick and tangled walks topped by the columned ruin," smoking a cob pipe or chewing his tobacco. "I like to sit here. I'm trying to find out what it must have felt like to be the fool that would need all this just to eat and sleep in."⁶ In *Sanctuary*, the old Frenchman's place is occupied by a nest of bootleggers; and in Temple Drake's defilement there, Faulkner is pointing to the ironic circumstance of modern man, who has lost or renounced his heritage.

III

"Barn Burning" is a short story about Abner Snopes, the father of the notorious Flem Snopes of *The Hamlet* and *The Town*. After the War, in which he fought under no flag, but in which he was shot in the heel on a stolen horse by "a Confederate Provost's man's musket ball," Snopes began his wretched peripatetic life as a share-cropper in north Mississippi. At the opening of the story he is being tried by a justice of the peace for his alleged burning of his landlord's barn; but unable to find against him, the justice warns him

⁵ *The Unvanquished*, Signet edition, p. 137.

⁶ *The Hamlet*, Modern Library Paperback, p. 6.

to leave the country. Snopes moves his family, including his two sons, Flem and Sarty, to Major DeSpain's place in Yoknapatawpha County.

Upon arriving at his new home, Snopes takes his son Sarty with him to visit the DeSpain house, to see "the man who is going to own me body and soul for the next year." As they approach the house down the cedared drive, Snopes steps into horse droppings; and without cleaning his feet he forces his way into the house over the protests of a Negro servant and soils an expensive imported rug. When Mrs. DeSpain reports the incident to the Major, he sends the rug to the Snopes house to be cleaned. Snopes orders his girls to set up the wash-pot and boil it in lye soap. The rug is ruined, and DeSpain charges him twenty bushels of corn against his crop. Snopes appeals to the justice of the peace, who finds against Snopes but reduces the fine to ten bushels of corn. Snopes is embittered. On reaching home that night after dark, he orders Sarty to bring a can of oil from the barn; and the whole family knows what he is going to do. Sarty asks his father if he is not going to send a Negro to warn Major DeSpain. "At least last time you sent a nigger." Snopes orders his wife to hold the boy. She tries, but he breaks away and runs to the Despain house, breaks into the door, and cries, "Barn! Barn!" and is out again before they can catch him. Despain rushes into the night and fires at the arsonists, but he is too late to save his barn. Sarty runs on into the deep woods alone, away from his home. He has heard the shots and believes his father is killed;⁷ and he is filling with despair at the thought of what he has done, "running on among the invisible trees, panting, sobbing, 'Father! Father!'"

In making a moral decision the Snopes boy cuts himself off from his own kind, and man in Faulkner's world who is still sensitive to moral values suffers the same isolation when he acts according to principle. In *Sanctuary* Horace Benbow alienates himself in his own community when he tries to save the life of the outlaw Lee Goodwin, a bootlegger and an adulterer, but innocent of the crime with which he is charged. "Can't you see," Horace says, "that perhaps a man might do something just because he knew it was right, necessary to the harmony of things that it be done."⁸ The easy way is the Snopes way, material, expedient, ruthless. The boy Sarty chooses the more difficult way, for he is inspired by an ideal which lifts him above the sordid circumstances of his life.

Sarty's name is actually Colonel Sartoris Snopes. Ab Snopes named his son for Colonel John Sartoris, a valiant Confederate officer and head of one of the oldest families in Jefferson.

"What's your name, Boy?" the Justice said.

"Colonel Sartoris Snopes," the boy whispered.

⁷ Actually Ab Snopes was not killed. See *Hamlet*, p. 14 ff.
⁸ *Sanctuary*, Signet edition, p. 156.

"Hey?" the Justice said. "Talk louder. Colonel Sartoris? I reckon anybody named for Colonel Sartoris in this country can't help but tell the truth, can they?"⁹

Sarty is not called to testify against his father; but later his father cuffs him across the head because he believes Sarty would have betrayed him. Perhaps he would have, but it is not through lack of loyalty to his father, whom he loves and respects, in spite of his faults. As they leave the scene of the trial, somebody hisses "Barn Burner!" after them, and Sarty blindly runs at his father's accuser and receives a blow in return. The pull of blood is strong; but as if his very name has worked in his imagination and called him to a higher loyalty, he refuses to give himself up to tainted blood, as his older brother Flem is later to do.

Faulkner dwells at length on the impression made on Sarty by Major DeSpain's house:

They walked beside a fence massed with honeysuckle and Cherokee roses and came to a gate swinging open between two brick pillars, and now, beyond a sweep of drive, he saw the house for the first time and at that instant he forgot his father and the terror and despair both, and even when he remembered his father again (who had not stopped) the terror and despair did not return. Because, for all the twelve movings, they had sojourned until now in a poor country, a land of small farms and fields and houses, and he had never seen a house like this before. *His big as a courthouse* he thought quietly, with a surge of peace and joy whose reason he could not have thought into words, being too young for that: *They are safe from him. People whose lives are a part of this peace and dignity are beyond his touch, he no more to them than a buzzing wasp: capable of stinging for a little moment but that's all; the spell of this peace and dignity rendering even the barns and stable and cribs which belong to it impervious to the puny flames he might contrive.*¹⁰

Inside the house, the boy,

deluged as though by a warm wave by a suave turn of carpeted stair and a pendant glitter of chandeliers and a mute gleam of gold frames, heard the swift feet and saw her too, a lady—perhaps he had never seen her like before either—in a gray, smooth gown with lace at the throat and an apron tied at the waist and the sleeves turned back, wiping cake or biscuit dough from her hands with a towel as she came up the hall.¹¹

The DeSpain home impresses Sarty because it is something he has not seen before; but its effect upon him is not merely the fascination of novelty. He sees it from the vantage point of his own shabby world; and although too young to put his thoughts into words he is drawn to make comparisons, to weigh and consider. His father limps before him, fierce and implacable, in the "flat, wide, black hat," and the "formal coat of broadcloth which had once been black but which had now that friction-glazed greenish cast of

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹ "Barn Burning," *Collected Stories*, p. 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

the bodies of old house flies." Abner Snopes has a "wolflike independence," a vicious strength which demands respect; and Sarty is drawn to his father by both love and fear. He hopes that his father's savageness will be reclaimed by the ordered and gentle world of the DeSpains. "Maybe he will feel it too. Maybe it will even change him now from what maybe he couldn't help but be."

Faulkner's concern with class distinction is implicit in most of his work. In the short story "There Was a Queen" the Sartoris Negro servant Elnora calls Narcissa, the wife of young Bayard Sartoris, unworthy of the family she has married into. "You and Miss Jenny both think ain't nobody been born since Miss Jenny," the Negro boy Isom says to his mother. "Who is been?" Elnora returns. Excepting Miss Jenny, quality is something Isom does not know anything about, because "you born too late to see any of it except her." Narcissa is only "town trash" in Elnora's estimation. "Because I knows trash. I knows the way trash goes about working in with quality. Quality can't see that, because it quality. But I can."¹²

In his recent books Faulkner has given a great deal of attention to the Jefferson lawyer, Gavin Stevens, who is a member of one of the old families of Jefferson. In the short story "Monk," Stevens has an interview with the governor of Mississippi, "a man without ancestry" or moral principle, who, for political reasons, is about to proclaim a general amnesty for convicts in the state penitentiary. He looks at Gavin "with his little, shrewd, plump face and his inscrutable, speculative eyes."

Mr. Stevens, you are what my grandpap would have called a gentleman. He would have snarled it at you, hating you and your kind; he might very probably have shot your horse from under you someday from behind a fence. . . . And you are trying to bring the notions of 1860 into the politics of the nineteen hundreds. And politics in the twentieth century is a sorry thing, smelling to high heaven in somebody's nose.¹³

Gavin Stevens, in his fumbling and often ineffectual way, is Faulkner's most recent spokesman for right and decency in Yoknapatawpha; and Faulkner clearly identifies him with the old order in the South.

IV

Faulkner's faith in the efficacy of the right sort of aristocracy is implicit in all of the Mississippi saga, and in the short story "Barn Burning" it becomes the central thesis. Faulkner has for the most part, though not always certainly, drawn his champions for justice from the aristocratic element of Jefferson; but to dwell on a superficial distinction of class is greatly to misunderstand Faulkner. He is not interested in the romantic aspect of a golden age, its social

¹² *Collected Stories*, p. 734.

¹³ *Knight's Gambit*, Signet edition, p. 46.

graces, its wealth, its splendor. This infatuation in the post-bellum novel led only to vitiating sentiment. Faulkner is no magnolia artist. His young gentlemen no longer make tender love and perform dashing deeds; and his young ladies are no longer the delicate, sheltered flowers which at one time are supposed to have incited men to such pursuits. Faulkner is concerned, not with these physical manifestations of the old order, real or imagined, but with its spirit, its inner life, its morality. The wealth of the planter lords, their great houses, their social graces, their leisure, the splendor of their existence, are to Faulkner mere excrescences, not undesirable in themselves, but meaningless without the vivifying spirit of a sound morality, to command the imagination and shape the lives of men.

The traditional morality of the old order is Faulkner's only concern. He is aware of certain defects and he would correct them; but he is convinced that with the demise of tradition, and an order of men committed to certain moral principles, the South and by extension the whole country has been plunged into moral chaos. The Snopeses have risen like ghosts from man's primordial past, with their greed, their lust, and the low cunning of animals unhampered by reflection or conscience. The Sartoris-DeSpain world, an artificial world as any civilized world must always be, erected over the cavern of man's evil nature, has been tumbled into the abyss; and the Snopes man, the natural man, with his unrestrained propensity to evil, inimical to discipline and order, has raised his ugly head above the ruins.

In "Barn Burning" Faulkner has expressed very clearly his belief in what is left of the old order as a power for good, even in the twentieth century. "Born Sartoris or born quality of any kind ain't *is* it's *does*."¹⁴ In his veneration of the traditional world above him, of those people whose lives were a part of the peace and dignity surrounding the very houses in which they lived, the boy, Colonel Sartoris Snopes was driven, through emulation, to make an ethical decision. A traditional order, Faulkner suggests, that is still able to incite men to decent action has not lost its relevance in modern life.

¹⁴ "There Was a Queen," *Collected Stories*, p. 732.

Parker Hodges

A fatal life
that fills out
excrescences of
greygreen days
with false grape love
with hopes of small girls
easing flowers from the false
generosity of noxious soil
(And unknowing archangels give
themselves honest death and steal
terror from their souls)
With false beliefs
in forgotten trips not taken
and names not shouted
and women not taken
and gods unforgotten
(Unconscious lives waken
end)
Laughing at the gods
crying at the self made gods
shaking
dreaming,, lying on sun starched
 earths
and poking fingers up unsuspecting
logicians with I figured out of
 existence
and little girls still pick flowers
 for Sappho's art
and twine garlands of poison ivy
through the woods
and still the archangels die
and still we die
and hope to live with an end
of rose petals stuck to our eyes

PARKER HODGES has previously been published in *Spectrum* and is awaiting publication in *Flame*. Mr. Hodges is a student at the University of North Carolina.

Robert Morris

Song Of The Past Rushing Into The Future

I

One beacon and sunset
In the dark are music heard
Around the aura of their instruments

The waves are a school of porpoises tonight
That rise and slide in yesterday

The night is a petal
Before it is a night

Three willets sliding up the water wall of heaven
Will be angels of Giotto
When they pass over

II

Flood tide and fall
Above the marsh are wine partaken
From the bouquet of an empty glass

The darkness is a slur
Arising from old nights
Around the continents

The moon was a canoe
Many moons ago

The hour is rain in soundproof jungles
Whenever it may come.

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Becky Gantner

You'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive

This is the obituary of . . .

ANDY SIRAK, who at the age of twenty-four, during the three to eleven shift at Republic Steel, while working on the blast furnace, slipped and plummeted into a vat of molten iron.

It was just his luck. . . .

He left: his father, in the A.A. hospital, a married sister in New Castle, a 1950 Ford, six friends on the same shift, the complete works of Mickey Spillane, a note for three beers at Bultz's, and the beginnings of a baby inside a Division Street woman.

There had not been an accident of that kind in the mill since the war, and the company faced a serious problem (moral and financial). Before the war, in such cases, they dumped the vat and dug it under, purely out of sentiment. There was nothing else they could do. During the war, when steel was vital, two men (in '42 and '44) added their chemical components to the steady flow of sheet metal. Now . . . ?

Andy Sirak had been a problem since the moment of his conception (which was a moment in time five months too soon to suit his mother). It was only natural that he should leave causing society no slight consternation.

Society had paid its debt to Andy Sirak long ago, and now Andy was demanding that it also pay the interest.

2.

The mourners were . . .

seated around a booth in Bultz's two days after the accident. They had just come off the shift. From left to right:

TOM HRINAK, mild-appearing, well-mannered and thoughtful (his small stature had often called for diplomacy rather than action), who had been working in the mill for nine years, except for a two-year break in the army, where he had volunteered for the paratroops. His diminutive person occasioned heroics now and then which, though meant to prove something, obviously didn't. For the

BECKY GANTNER, a resident of New York City, took her Master of Arts degree from Western Reserve University. She has published a short story in *South West Review*.

past three years he had been attempting to understand himself by taking courses at the local university, mainly philosophy and psychology (which, though meant to prove something, obviously weren't). Having the intelligence to matriculate into a world that he ardently desired, in which something vaguely described as culture was to be found, he hesitated to leave the security of mill seniority and the comfort of his Slovak home. This routine, though dull, made few demands, giving him ample time for reading, "tom catting" around, and quoting Marcus Aurelius for his personal edification. During the last steel strike Tom had spent a month in New York, but his round of theatre and book hunting was interrupted by a singer in a small village night club, who had cost him an extravagant three hundred dollars (as compared to the forty he had spent on books). In what exactly this investment consisted he had not told his friends, who, naturally thinking the worst, had nothing but admiration for him. In all respects but one he was totally unassuming, and this one (the psychologists might have made something of it) was his vocabulary, from which he invariably chose the big word where the small would have sufficed.

Tom lately had become much impressed by a new boy on the shift . . .

HUGHIE MACE, cynic and intellectual since the eleventh grade, when, for an English assignment, he had done a book report on the then popular *Forever Amber* (which he subsequently read aloud before the class) and caused a small but satisfying commotion. Later in the principal's office (his teacher, a Miss Wilson, State Teachers '34, had tried to suppress his right of free speech) when the whole thing assumed a degree of seriousness greater than he had anticipated, he denounced the faculty . . . as being "unenlightened," denounced the school . . . as "reactionary," denounced the educational system . . . as "assinine," denounced the government . . . as "corrupt," denounced religion . . . as "the opiate of the people" (a phrase he had heard once and admired), and denounced women . . . as an afterthought. Naturally, after taking this stand, he refused to return to school. He would have denounced his family also, but he had no private income.

Having proclaimed his manifesto, he spent the next seven years expounding it for anyone who cared to listen, and trying to rid himself of his virginity to anyone who cared to accept it (having neither charm nor independent income he had not succeeded). Lately his virginity was proving an annoying pea under his manifesto: while it confirmed his suspicions that he was a true prince, it quite often kept him awake.

Inasmuch as he had scorned high school, he had of necessity scorned college, and, having neither degree nor trade, was unable to find employment worthy of his intellectual abilities (a thorough

grounding in H. L. Mencken, the opinion that Philip Wylie had more to say and said it better than anyone else, a grudging admiration for F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the willingness to argue against anything).

Due to Hughie's asthma, a cause for alarm and indulgence by his mother, his father (medium income, hardworking) had been forced to support him in a manner (to which he had become accustomed) beyond the family means. When his mother died, his grief stricken father turned on him threatening expulsion from the house. Hughie had been stunned, stayed five days in a local hotel (his father refused to pay the bill), hitchhiked twenty miles out of town . . . and twenty miles back, and at the age of twenty-three went to work in the mill, telling Tom, who believed him, that he was gathering material for a novel.

Across from him sat . . .

MIKE SVERKO, called the little bull as distinguished from his brother, the big bull (whom he had sadly outdistanced in sheer bulk two years ago). At twenty-five he asked no more from life than did his father and three brothers, all of whom worked in the mill; and life rewarded them with four paychecks totaling thirty thousand dollars yearly plus overtime, and which were negotiable for such things as television sets, cars, radios, and large pieces of pastel tufted furniture. On Sundays at nine o'clock mass, the Sverko men presented a solid phalanx of good nature and muscle, prodded to the communion rail by a tiny adored "little mother," a Romanian . . . but inasmuch as the genes had all fallen on the father's side, they considered themselves pure Croat (much to the dismay of the local Serbs).

In high school Mike had been an athlete, finally becoming a district football champion solely by virtue of the psychological effect his presence created upon the opposing teams. Three colleges even went so far as to offer him scholarships despite the overwhelming odds presented by his I.Q. By graduation however, he had had enough school (he had made this same decision in the fourth grade and had honestly failed to understand why no one else could see his point) and went cheerfully to work in the mill secure in the knowledge that he would have a better life than his friends who had decided to prolong the agony for another four years.

Lately Tom, appalled by Mike's lack of interest where things of the mind were concerned, had prevailed upon him to read something, and presented him with the works of Thomas Wolfe. Though Mike had not read much, he often expressed his opinions on modern literature with the statement, repeated several times for emphasis, "Tom Wolfe, there was a man that really knows how to write." (He was equally impressed with the fact that Mrs. Gant set a table almost as lavish as his own little mother.) The relationship between

Tom and Mike had become, as Tom expressed it, "sympiotic," with Mike serving as a buffer and Tom advising him in matters of taste, where Mike had a genuine regard for the flamboyant. Hughie, Mike endured patiently, accepting him as part of the plan of nature. He would have preferred it had Hughie been a Serb. Serbs he felt not to be part of nature's plan, but a disturbing mutation. Mike enjoyed the sessions at Bultz's, the beer more often than the conversation (except when it centered on sex, which was often); however, he disbelieved Hughie's wild stories. While he liked a good broad now and then himself, he felt Hughie hardly man enough to have done "all that," and why unnecessarily complicate a good thing? Mike had a girl named Nancy, who was pure. Which was exactly how it should have been.

And there was . . .

JOHNNY PALUCCI, a family man when he could be perverted upon to come home, married five years ago to a beautiful brown-eyed Sicilian, who upon leaving the altar immediately put on weight and presented him with a child a year. (He blamed her wholly.) Before his friends Johnny maintained an air of complete independence belied by the pictures in his wallet, of children rather than presidents. As the only married man in the group, he was regarded as an authority on sex, about which he chiefly conversed. He was often challenged by Hughie, who had received a number of books (in plain wrapper, by filling out the coupon and enclosing check or money order) on the subject.

3.

Services at the wake were conducted by . . .

JOHN BULTZ, the proprietor, who came out of the kitchen rubbing his hands on a dirty towel and performed the proper rites with a can opener over four bottles of beer. Unlike the Steel Door where most of the workers went, Bultz made no concession to commercialism, still having only a beer and wine license. For ten years the bar had provided a living for himself and his wife Mary, and he saw no reason why it should not continue to do so for another ten despite progress. The small frame building that was "Bultz's Bar Beer-Wine" also furnished their living quarters, in the back, connected to the bar by a joint kitchen which they shared with their patrons: an excellent arrangement that allowed Mary to cook supper, tend bar, and sell the leftovers in sandwiches. The customer section was resplendent with an old fashioned wooden bar, two coolers, a rack for chips and pretzels, and six wooden booths. As a tribute to art, a Miller High Life display hung on the wall, designed to be lighted from behind by a sixty watt light bulb (now residing in Bultz favorite reading lamp). It was a practice of Bultz to

maneuver bulbs from the bar to the living quarters and back until both sections of the establishment threatened to be engulfed in darkness, whereupon he would buy a new supply and begin the entire strategy once more. Neon or fluorescent lights would have upset his whole system. While he had no juke box (would you want a jukebox in your home?), Bultz had furnished the place with a television set: a move geared strictly for his own enjoyment and no concession to the customers whatsoever. Quite often John and Mary would close up (whether or not they had patrons at the time seldom influenced their decision) to sit and watch a favorite program. If a steady customer pounded on the door long enough, Bultz could be prevailed upon to admit him as a social gesture and might even sell him a beer. Despite the obvious odds against it Bultz entertained a thriving business (he had three small cabins in the back, but no one could prove anything), successfully avoided paying the major part of his income tax, and had been able, last year, to send Mary back to the old country to visit her relatives.

As Bultz approached the booth, Johnny was expounding his favorite subject: that men who are capable should be permitted to have a harem. (He considered himself infinitely capable.)

"Just how do you propose to support this effort?" Tom fondled his pipe, which had gone out (but then he carried it only for effect).

"Hell, who said anything about support?" Johnny was indignant.

"I suppose," Hughie said, "you think the Ford Foundation will subsidize you just to keep the women happy?"

"That's all you to talk about, all the time sex!" Bultz set the beers down and leaned on the table, his eyes sparkling expectantly as he waited.

Tom reached into his pocket to pay for the round. "Bultz, what do you think of John's idea? Should a man be allowed to have more than one wife?"

"Jesu Maria!" Bultz raised his hands toward Heaven. "That anyone should want two wives. What I'm gonna do with the one I got? One wife, she's too much."

"Yeah, John, Bultz knows, you just ask him," Mike said. "Hey, Bultz, how many grandchildren do you have now?"

"I dunno, fifteen mebbe sixteen, I lose count." Bultz winked at the group. "I got one on the way mebbe. My boy Georgie, he's got himself married last June, mebbe they gonna have one. Georgie's wife, she's kinda dumb." He shrugged, "She dunno for sure yet. Believe me, if I'm her, I know." He leaned over and motioned them closer. "Your friend, used to come with you, Andy Sirak, he come in here a couple a time with his woman. I could tell right off." Bultz nodded confidently. "Right off."

"Yeah, that's right, I heard he had knocked up some dame," Johnny said. "He was real worried about it down at the furnace."

She needed some money and wanted him to get it. I guess she sure made it hot for him." He looked around to see if his pun had gone over. "Yeah, that's what they call out of the frying pan and into the fire."

Hughie grimaced.

"It isn't funny," Tom said. "What a degrading way to die."

"Yeah," Johnny was annoyed. "A real lousy way to go. One minute he's alive and the next just a little grease bubble floating on top." He looked around to see how they were taking it. "That's the way it is. You don't even get time to scream out before you're dissolved, completely, nothing left at all to show you even was there but the vat burning away in the dark. Makes you sick at your stomach, don't it?" He raised his glass and took a large swallow.

"I don't suppose he coulda felt nothing," Mike ventured. "It woulda been too quick."

"Oh, there's one second," Johnny said quickly. "One second when you know it's happening. You see the vat coming to meet you, feeling the heat and you know you've had it. You're grabbing air screaming for help, and then you're sucked under. All you see is fire until it burns your eyes and you can't scream anymore cause its pouring down your throat and your skin is all slipping away from the bones." He took another noisy draught, relishing his success.

Tom was silent, vainly searching in his philosophy for a soothing sentiment to erase the horror. He felt his insides crumbling, the muscles contracting in concern. Though he professed stoicism after Marcus Aurelius, Tom's genuine regard for humanity usually betrayed him in situations like this. Also the fact that he had mentally projected himself into the situation did little to improve his state of mind. The all-powerful will of the stoic gave way to the traitor kidney. He excused himself hurriedly.

Johnny continued, "that one minute when every inch is burning alive." He noticed Hughie's pallor. "Just one minute of excruciating pain, that's how it is." He grinned at Hughie. "That's how it is, Hugh . . . just like sex!"

Hughie's face reddened. Had Johnny discovered his virginity? (He had badly garbled some elementary details in his last story.) "Oh yeah? I'd like to know where the hell you've been sleeping? It sounds like you've been making love under a defective electric blanket."

Bultz roared appreciatively.

Mike was puzzled. Maybe he had been missing something, but they say it's different with the girl you really love. He thought about Nancy briefly—was embarrassed and ashamed—he banished the thought. "Hey, how about this? I heard it cost the mill twenty thousand bucks a load to dump that vat. That's some funeral. I bet none of you guys are gonna get a funeral like that."

"What a waste," Hughie scoffed. "A bunch of sentimental boobs dumping all that iron. Now if it had been me, they might have cast me into a statue of the Holy Ghost and presented me to Local 104 as a memento—a reliquary, that's it—something classy, signifying the dignity of work and the sanctity of religion. You gus could have said mass over me on holy days."

"I don't know," Johnny demurred. "The Holy Ghost was a bird, Hugh, not an ass."

Hughie was annoyed; since he seriously pictured himself as the anti-Christ, nothing infuriated him more than being considered harmless. "Listen," he stormed, rising from the bench and backing into Tom who had just returned from the head. Tom's presence (they honestly respected his horror of violence) was a quieting influence. Mike rapidly changed the subject; for while Tom's idea of arbitration was infinitely reasonable—though nonetheless time consuming—the group reflex for avoiding reason as the duller of two evils was well conditioned. "Hey, Bultz," Mike said, "What did she look like?"

"Who look like?"

"The girl, you know, the one that gave Andy Sirak the business."

"Oh her . . . she's kinda pretty," Bultz mused. "Twenty-six, mebbe eight . . . poor kid, no papa."

"What's that got to do with it . . ." Hughie began.

"He means the baby," Tom interrupted. "You know, I wonder when, I mean how far along the baby is. This is really a shameful start in life for a child. I think Andy would have done right by the girl if he had had the chance."

Hughie looked dubious and Johnny coughed in his beer.

"Yeah, I think so," Mike began—he believed in a world where angels guarded the circle of his acquaintance and evil *per se* lurked only outside the faith (which accounted nicely for Hughie)—"I think he wanted to, huh Tom? Maybe he was trying to save up some money."

"He was a good boy," Bultz mused. "It's too bad. All a time such luck he's got. He say to me one night, 'Bultz, I'm just plain unlucky.' God, he was right." Bultz shook his head mournfully. "Jesus God, he was right!"

"You boobs make me sick," Hughie said. "Some moron gets himself killed and right away you amateur Jesuses want to canonize him. Bad luck, balderdash, Andy Sirak was a clear case of paranoia. According to Freud . . ."

"Freud?" questioned Bultz. "Who's Freud?"

"Who's Freud!" Hughie shouted.

Tom broke in tactfully, "Freud was an Austrian, Bultz, a doctor who invented the theory of psychoanalysis—according to his theory . . ."

"Could he speak four languages?" interrupted Bultz.

"Why, I don't know." Tom hesitated.

"I'm speaking Slovak, Ukrain, Croat . . . and English," he added proudly.

"What's that got to do with it?" Hughie yelled enraged.

"Freud, he was Slovak maybe?" Bultz looked pityingly at Hughie. "Andy Sirak was Slovak." Having settled the matter he picked up the empty bottles and departed.

"Boy, you sure got to get up early to beat Bultz," Mike said with admiration. "There's a man who really knows."

Hughie swore.

"I think,"—Tom looked at the group cautiously—"I really think that since we are all friends of Andy Sirak . . . were," he corrected himself, "and since Mike and I are—a—ethnically related to . . ."

"Huh?" Mike questioned.

"You're all Bohunks," Hughie explained.

Tom ignored Hughie. "That we should make some effort to—um—alleviate the difficulties of his widow."

"Widow, hell," Hughie laughed.

"Yeah," Johnny said thoughtfully, "I get you." The image of four fatherless little Paluccis flooded his mind. He took another swallow of beer and burped softly. The kids weren't so bad; with each beer they became a little more bearable. "Yeah, we got a duty." He spread his hands out on the table. "I know you guys'd do it for me."

"Let's not get completely maudlin," Hughie remarked.

"Are we gonna pass the hat?" Mike asked. "When Al Corradi's kid got the polio, you remember, Tom," he turned explaining to Hughie, "Tom collected almost a hundred dollars off the guys. When they heard it was for . . ."

"No," Tom said. "I think this affair should be handled with a little, well, more subtlety."

"Too bad Andy Sirak didn't." Hughie raised his glass and motioned for Bultz, who choose to ignore the request.

Tom continued, "With dignity. After all, we're not selling turkey raffles. This is an altruistic gesture . . ."

Hughie banged his glass demandingly on the table several times. Bultz hummed and polished the bar intently. Hughie stood the insult as long as he could. "Would one of you altruistic bastards on the outside kindly"—he raised his voice—"inform the *bartender* that I want another lousy beer?"

Bultz looked down his glasses. Hughie had offended the laws of hospitality. Tom felt a crisis approaching.

"The bar, she's closed." Bultz declared flatly.

"Closed!" yelled Hughie. "It's only eleven thirty."

"The bar closes at eleven-thirty," Bultz announced, turning off the overhead light for emphasis.

"Well, shall we drink up," Tom said quickly turning to the group.

"Of all the sorehead, idiots . . ." Hughie began, but Mike was behind him helping him into his coat.

"Look, you gotta learn," Johnnie said, "You treat people okay, they're gonna be nice to you."

"Look who's talking," Hughie protested.

As they drove off they could see a single light glowing from Bultz's window, in the right hand corner over the bar. "I wonder what's on on the midnight movie," Mike said.

4.

Monetary tributes rather than flowers . . .

were requested by Tom and Mike in the name of the Andy Sirak Memorial Fund. Their plan of soliciting donations in the backroom of the Steel Door was a decisive factor in the success of the undertaking. The Steel Door's payday crap game was a long standing tradition, and even the most conservative workers stopped in to venture a few dollars in the hope of adding a little extra to the "take home." The game generally began at seven A.M. on Friday morning when the night shift came off, and continued until two A.M. closing time on Saturday when the last weary die-hard filed out from behind the innocent brick facade of the "Door," where larger than the liquor sign, yet not quite as large as the club name, the legend stood in bubbling neon, "Pay Checks Cashed." Though the existence of the game was well known in the area (and as well established as the Catholic Church), it was seldom attended by the forces of law and order. There was little to fear from city hall—most of the officials, if not relatives of the participants, had worked in the mill themselves. However, when outside gamblers tried to infiltrate, they received prompt "official" notice that the game at the "Door" was strictly a local custom.

The biggest organized threat to the game to date had been from wives, the most recent onslaught having been July 24, when a delegation headed by the mesdames Innocenzi, Horvatt, and Palucci had invaded the "Door" to protect the following week's grocery money. The game had ended eight hours early.

Collections for the Andy Sirak Memorial Fund began simultaneously with the game as Tom and Mike, coming off the night shift, greeted the regulars with outstretched palms, Tom making request couched in his favorite polysyllables reinforced by Mike, who, overwhelmingly present, merely added, "Yeah, and we figure you would want to contribute something." He was generally right.

Since the donor stood to lose a few in the game anyhow, he might as well lose to a good cause, and if he won, it would be "no strain." Thus the fund for the temporal, educational and spiritual (Tom saw himself vaguely as godfather) welfare of Andy Sirak, Jr., grew with the afternoon.

Succumbing to temptation, Mike faded twice and lost about sixty dollars of the fund money, which, at his suggestion, was kicked back in with interest, "seeing as he had only been trying to ante-up the take a little."

By the two A.M. closing, Mike and Tom had collected two hundred and forty-three dollars, consumed seventeen and nineteen beers respectively plus nine pizza pies (with pepperoni), won eighty-four ninety in side bets and raised the general feeling of fellowship, charity and goodwill to a high, unusual for the Steel Door even at two A.M. on Saturday.

However, one Lu Danko, was not nearly so concerned with the temporal, spiritual, and educational welfare of Andy Sirak, Jr. as were the contributors to the Andy Sirak Fund: She knew a pharmacist who took care of such things on the side. He had come to her attention highly recommended by her friend Myra Olsavsky, who was seated on the hassock, polishing her nails in a shade called Revealing Red when the doorbell rang.

5

Calling hours . . .

began at nine thirty-two P.M. Sunday evening when Tom's Buick pulled up alongside the curb on Division Street, and Hughie strained out the window to read the house number.

"Five-thirty-four," he replied. "Looks like a dump to me."

They could see the house, a double, rust colored by coke from the mill, at night mercifully black except for the glow that penetrated drawn maroon curtains proclaiming the presence of someone in the room behind them.

Tom turned off the ignition and faced the others. "Well, this looks like it."

"You want us to all come?" questioned Mike.

"I think it would be a nice gesture," Tom said. He reached in his coat pocket to make sure that he had the envelope containing the three hundred and seventy dollars they had collected. They were all wearing suits, and Hughie sported a homberg which kept sliding down against his ears. He looked self-conscious, but defiant. The haberdashery was not for the occasion of the call, but for a party Tom's sister Lee was throwing, where they were invited to meet some nice girls. (Lee had promised them nice girls, which by Lee's standards could be interpreted optimistically to mean anything.)

"Yeah, we might as well," Johnny agreed. "I want to see this doll anyway."

They mounted the porch apprehensively and lined themselves before the door Mike holding the rear. Tom rang the bell.

"Je—sus, my nails are wet!" Myra, the applicator poised between two fingers, the rest outspread, stopped in annoyance. "Hey, Honey," she called to the kitchen. "You expecting anybody tonight?"

Lu came out of the kitchen, a large blond, Polish on her mother's side, who at twelve had had the same measurements as she did now at twenty-six (Andy Sirak, Jr. had not as yet begun to force his presence noticeably on the outside world). Though Lu was slightly nervous about the impending operation, she was more chagrined at having been caught after all these years. (Andy Sirak's phenomenal luck in operation again.) Her virginity she had lost before her mother had made it quite clear to her that she had had such a commodity, and had she known, she would have upped the price instead of keeping her mouth shut for the five dollars Joe Marinelli had promised her. He was a neighborhood boy, hardly more than seventeen—she had been ten at the time—when he wanted to show her something in his garage. What she finally did see was nothing new to her, living in a neighborhood where no one stopped a game merely for the formalities of life; but the mechanics, heretofore unexplored, she regarded with an interest that could almost be called scientific. Her most intense sensation was the thought, "Hell, why didn't I figure that out before." This scientific turn of mind might have resulted in a career of humanitarian service, had she not more practically decided that humanity was just asking to be taken. While she was fairly bright, the fact that her body had far outdistanced her mind was not ignored by the male students of her high school. This climaxed in her sophomore year when she stayed after classes to help record Biology grades as a reward for having done the best dissection. Her frog, which she had very carefully separated and classified into organs and systems, (becoming rather annoyed at nature's haphazard tangle), was a masterpiece of precision. However, before six grades, all C's, had been recorded in Mr. Gustinella's grade book, she had become aware he was taking an interest in her that could amount to her own dissection if she were not careful.

A week later Mr. Gustinella was mysteriously discharged and Lu Danko, completely disillusioned with education, went to work in a drive-in hamburger spot. It did not take her long to discover that if money was to be made, it did not lie in hamburgers, and being nothing if not resourceful, she had managed to support herself quite well working no more than two or three hours a day.

Though she never lost her empiric attitude toward life, science she left to those less capable of private enterprise.

Lu opened the door a crack and regarded Tom with an arched eyebrow: though she had not been expecting anyone, neither was she inclined to quibble with circumstance. "Yeah?"

Tom was somewhat taken back. He had not anticipated to find a bereaved widow, but he was ill prepared for anything like Lu Danko, whose presence might best be described at times as overpowering. "Miss Danko?"

"That's right." She opened the door a few more inches.

"We're friends of Andy Sirak."

Lu opened the door wider.

"Uh, that is we . . ."

"Well, you might as well come in," Lu invited.

Tom hesitated, but Johnny and the others surged forward. They stood blinking in the living room.

Lu was cautious. "So?"

"That is, we work with Andy . . . I mean worked." Tom, ill at ease, could summon only words of one syllable.

Lu waited.

"I'm Tom Hrinak—uh—Hughie Mace," he indicated, "Johnny Palucci, Mike Sverko."

They nodded. Hughie glared from under the hat which he obstinately refused to remove.

"Wontcha sit down?"

Myra emerged from the bathroom where she had darted, upon hearing male voices, to inspect her make-up. She was still blowing on her left hand . . . one of the nails had gotten smudged.

"This is my girl friend, Myra Olsavsky . . . Tom you said?"

"That's right, Tom, Hughie, John, Mike," Tom repeated.

Johnny decided to be charming (there might be something in it after all) and gave Myra a welcoming smile. Hughie under the hat was silent and defensive while Mike, already seated in an arm chair, made a token effort to rise.

"These here are friends of Andy," Lu explained. (Tom thought he detected sarcasm.)

"Pleased to meetcha!" Myra rose to the occasion. "That certainly was a tough break, him being so young and all too."

"Yeah, a real bad shame." Johnny had forgotten to remove the smile and this remark was accompanied by a suggestive leer. Tom frowned. It was not going at all as he had planned it. He searched in his mind for the speech he had been rehearsing.

"Well, are you gonna sit down or not?" Lu questioned.

Tom backed into a chair and sat uneasily on its edge. He glanced disapprovingly at Johnny seated next to Myra on the couch. Hughie alone stood, poised for flight.

"Ah, Andy often mentioned you," Tom began. He intended to introduce a few fictitious compliments before getting to the embarrassing reason for the call, but Lu interrupted. "I don't

know," she said. "I wasn't figuring on transacting any business tonight." She looked at Myra seated next to Johnny, who was eyeing her with approval. "What do you think, My; shall we entertain the gentlemen here?" She pointed to Hughie standing by the door. "That one ain't very social, is he?"

Hughie gave her a look of what he considered disdain, and seated himself in a straight chair, choosing to ignore the motions Tom was making for him to remove his hat.

Tom frowned. He tried another opening. "Andy's friends at the mill have—um—delegated us to express their heartfelt grief and sympathy . . ."

"You out making social calls?" Myra questioned Johnny.

"Oh, you might say so." He grinned. "I feel pretty sociable."

Tom raised his voice ". . . express their heartfelt grief and sympathy . . ."

"Did you see it?" questioned Lu with interest.

"Ah, no, I . . ."

"Anybody here see it?"

They looked at each other.

"Oh, well," she said with disappointment. "I figure he musta been drunk to do an ignorant thing like that. I coulda told him. He was always unlucky though; but he'd of had to be drunk. What do you think?"

Tom looked to Johnny. "Oh, I'm sure he'd of had to be drinking," Johnny said quickly. "You know they got a lot of safety precautions down there."

"Yeah, that's what I figured. Wouldja like a bottle of beer?" Lu questioned.

"I don't really think," began Tom.

"Sure that would be real nice," interrupted Johnny giving Myra a chummy smile. "I'm thirsty."

Tom tried once more. "The reason we came is—a—Andy told us much about you, Miss Danko, that . . ."

"I'll bet he did." Lu glanced at Myra and raised her eyebrows questioningly.

Myra nodded approval.

"I'll just bet he did." Lu turned to go into the kitchen. "Maybe you'll help me with the opener," she asked Tom. "I'm afraid all we got is cans, its being Sunday and all. We don't generally have visitors on Sunday."

"Don't go to any trouble for us," Tom insisted. "I'm sure that we . . ."

"Coming" asked Lu.

Tom followed her into the kitchen.

Johnny turned to Myra. "You girls both live here?"

"Oh, you might say we got an arrangement of sorts." She smiled.

"We got five boys in our family and only one girl," Mike said. "My mother, she's the only girl." He and Myra laughed.

Hughie was silently sizing Myra up.

"What's he staring at?" she complained. "Something the matter? Say, don't he got no hair under that hat?"

"Oh, don't pay any attention to him," Johnny assured her. "See, he's a genius. He don't like to expose his brain to the populace."

Myra laughed appreciatively.

"At least," said Hughie, "I don't go around exposing my intentions like some people."

"What'd he mean by that?" asked Myra.

"Lu's voice called from the hallway, "Your beer's on the sink if you want it." The footsteps continued up the stairs.

Johnny looked at Myra. "Want me to get you a beer?" he asked.

"Yeah, please. Maybe I'd better show you where." Myra led him into the kitchen leaving Hughie and Mike facing each other. Mike had found a dish of stale nuts on the table and was chewing placidly, breaking the shells with his fingers.

"Well, he'll get what he came for," said Hughie grimly.

"Huh?" questioned Mike reaching for another pecan.

"Oh, don't worry, you'll get yours too. I intend to get mine. Throw me some of those nuts."

6

Survivors of the deceased are . . .

Tom, Mike, Johnny, and Lu who stood in the living room waiting for Hughie. They could hear Myra shouting as Hughie stomped down the stairs.

His face appeared in the doorway beseeching them. "All I have is five dollars."

Myra stormed into the room. "That little chisler, he thinks it's for free . . ."

"I only have five dollars," Hughie protested.

"My God," she implored. "Do you think all I got to do is teach the facts of life to kids at half price?"

"Look." Hughie was stubborn. "All I've got is five dollars."

"If you're gonna play like the men, sonny, you're gonna need more than movie money." She turned to Johnny. "Next time leave the kid home when you go out. I'm nobody's baby sitter."

Johnny grinned at Hughie's discomfort.

Lu motion to Myra and shook her head. "Well," she said, "I'm sorry to see you gentlemen have to hurry off. It was real nice to meet you all, and you ought to stop again when you got more time."

"Who said we was going?" Johnny asked, but Tom stood up. "Well, Miss Danko, it's been a real pleasure I'm sure." (Myra

snorted) Tom floundered, "Ah, and I hope everything will work out for the best with the little fellow."

Lu smiled slowly. "I'm sure it will."

"Well," Tom found himself backed against the door. "If you need anything a—be sure to let us know and we'll be glad to . . ."

"Yeah," said Myra, "we seen how you will." She glared at Hughie who stubbornly stood his ground though his hand reached for the door knob.

Mike took his cue from Tom. "Yeah, that's right. Thank you for your hospitality, and if there's anything, the fellows down the mill'll be glad to give you a hand. Myra rolled her eyes heavenward. "When Al Coradi's kid had the polio, Tom here . . ." Tom elbowed Mike toward the door, which Hughie had opened. Mike looked hurt, but allowed himself to be pushed out onto the porch. Johnny made one last attempt at charm still eying Myra as he bid them good-night. "Oh, for christsake dry up," Myra muttered under her breath. Lu slammed the door.

They got into the Buick and drove off. Johnny was the first to break the silence. "Man, that was some woman." He winked at Hughie. "Too much woman for a beginner."

Hughie winced and said vehemently, "That bitch."

"Hey, Tom," Mike asked, "did you give her the money, Tom?"

Tom turned the car slowly onto the main street. "There was hardly anything else I could do."

"Whew, what a time you must of had." Johnny whistled. "I bet that was the most expensive lay anybody in the mill ever had."

Tom shrugged. "Andy Sirak," he said, "*requiescat in pace*."

"Huh?" questioned Mike.

"If you ask me," Hughie said (no one showed any inclination to ask him). "If you ask me, you guys were taken."

"We," corrected Tom turning into Lee street. "We were taken."



Dennis Parks

Farm Scene

When will the days of windy eaves cease
When will the down-pound of wood on brick ease
 And storm and air be solid;
 Hollow greeting the rain.
Even my father
Even he who thought he had seen the last storm blown,
 never thought such as these
Would rut and pool his yard,
 like a fat man's knees.
If the wind ever weeps to a gutter clang,
What animals not dead, glue-eyed to barn rafters,
 ears
Will be nibbling & or rooting at the latch.
 eyes
 And they will ask father's last courage
To walk through mad laughter: To carry them food.

DENNIS PARKS has published several poems in *Spectrum*, a magazine which he edited.

Mary W. Brown

No Sound In The Night

To Bunny the only thing new about Jean Day was her job. She was a local girl, and he'd known her back when he was in high school and she was in grade school. Of course he never finished school but she did, college even. Now, less than six months after Bill Griffin dropped dead in his front yard, Jean was editor of the *Chronicle*.

Ed, the linotypist, and Henshaw, the ad man, shook their heads when they heard it. But Jean won them over right away. She was pretty, friendly, nice, and all that; but the main thing was, she was good. They got the paper to bed on time every week now, and that made it easy on everyone.

She loved it too, you could tell. Every day when they got out the quads and gathered around the stone to shoot for cokes, her brown eyes sparkled. She was like a little girl let in on something big. She would shake the Jessies as though her life depended on it, but she seemed happiest of all when she lost and could pay for the set-up.

She asked Ed and Henshaw a lot of questions and listened so hard she was unconscious of her face. Sometimes her mouth would stay open, and sometimes she frowned with such concentration it was comical to watch. But Bunny never felt like laughing. More like crying, in a way.

"You can't learn all that in journalism school," she would say to Ed and Henshaw.

Bunny never expected her to notice him at all. He was only a printer's devil, and besides he knew how he looked with his long front teeth, little watery eyes, and hands like paws. His nickname wasn't Bunny for nothing. But Jean didn't seem to see any difference.

"Where do you eat, Bunny?" she asked one day as they were leaving the shop at noon. Ed and Henshaw were both married and ate at home.

"Luke's, most of the time," Bunny said.

"Mind if I come with you?" she asked. "The Grille is awful."

As they walked down the sidewalk, everyone smiled and waved so pleasantly Bunny was not embarrassed to be with a girl for the

MARY WARD BROWN resides in Marion, Alabama. She has studied creative writing with Charles Edward Eaton and John Craig Stewart. This is her first published work.

first time in all his thirty-two years. At Luke's they found a booth and ordered the regular dinner.

"Not good, but not as bad as The Grille," Jean decided after a few bites.

"You know what they use to say?" Bunny heard himself asking. His upper lip was too short and had a way of working nervously up and down. "They use to say 'When you eat at The Grille and read the *Chronicle*, you're still hungry and you don't know nothin.'"

Jean laughed so hard he had to laugh too. "Bunny, that's priceless," she said, catching her breath in exaggerated pain.

"But that was before you," he hastened to explain. "They don't say that now."

"Well, I'm glad," she said. Examining an encrusted sugar spoon, stained brown where someone let it dip in coffee, she was suddenly serious. "Because I'm giving it all I've got."

"And . . . and . . ." Bunny was so excited he began to stutter. His lip wiggled uncontrollably. All you have to do is keep your mind on it, his mother said, but he could never keep his mind on two things at once. "That's a lot!" he finally burst out.

He tried to think of something else to make Jean laugh but couldn't, and she wasn't the kind who talked when there was nothing to say. They ate their dinner, finished up their coffee and left. Bunny could tell she was anxious to get back to the shop.

"I enjoyed it, Bunny," she said, at the door of the office. The office was little more than a cubbyhole with a desk, telephone, two typewriters, and a couple of chairs. But Jean had fixed it all up. She bought coffee mugs and hung them on the wall, found a table for the hot plate and percolator, and brought a flower for the desk. Beside the flower she kept a framed snapshot of a handsome young man that Bunny didn't know.

That night when Bunny's mother, Mrs. Drake, asked what he had for dinner, he couldn't remember.

"Fish?" she said. "They had fresh catfish at the market."

"No'm. We didn't eat fish."

"We?" Mrs. Drake registered a quick rise in interest.

"Jean and me," he said.

"She ate with you?" Her eyes extracted an answer of their own. Then a more important question popped clearly into mind. "Did you pay for her dinner?"

"No'm." Bunny lowered pale, blue-veined eyelids. "She paid for her own."

Mrs. Drake spooned some jelly from a jar that still bore the label "Pride of Alabama." Bunny thought she was going to talk about how hard it was to make ends meet, but she didn't.

After supper he dried the dishes as she washed them. Then he carried out garbage, locked the back door and the front door, and

they sat in the living room until bedtime. Bunny read comic books while Mrs. Drake studied her Sunday School lesson and the Bible. The Bible was where she found strength to bear all her crosses, she said. Her crosses were labeled: a husband who deserted her, female trouble, the lack of money, and hardest to bear of all, a handicapped child. Bunny would never forget the day she told him that he was the handicapped child. He had brought home a report card with all D's and F's, and she told him. She sat down, dried off her hands on her apron, and told him. He stared down at the checks on the kitchen linoleum until she finished, and his heart beat like that of a captive bird, but he did not cry. The truth was, she didn't need to tell him. He already knew.

The next morning he got up early, ate a bowl of corn flakes, and left before Mrs. Drake woke up. At the shop he had already swept the whole place and emptied all the trash cans when Ed and Henshaw got there. He was dusting the office, just as he planned, when Jean came in.

"Hi, Bunny," she said, putting down a clip board on which she collected bit by bit The Five W's of the happenings of the town. "Did you know it's officially the first day of spring?"

He didn't know, but he should have. His heart was like a long dormant but viable seed, beginning to wake and swell. He took his dust rag and left right away. All he wanted was to see her.

They ate together every day after that. Around eleven Bunny would begin to watch the clock and wait, and at twelve on the dot he moseyed up toward the office; but he never interrupted. He just stood around, pretending to stack leads and slugs in the type case or something, until Jean looked up. If she happened to be out on a story, he waited in the front door, rain or shine, beneath the sign that said THE FAIRVIEW CHRONICLE. Once when she didn't get back, he stood there until ten minutes of one and then got a milk shake; but he never told Jean. He let her think he went on to Luke's as usual.

Most of the time they talked about the paper and the work in progress, but sometimes Jean told him things about herself. He came to know that her mother died when she was fifteen and she had a stepmother she didn't like. She didn't say so, but Bunny could tell. Her father was in the lumber business and away from home a lot. And she didn't like walking, especially back and forth to work. That's why she was saving up money for a car. Most often she mentioned a boy named Bob Carter. It was his snapshot that she kept on her desk.

It wasn't long before Bob dropped in at the *Chronicle*. He looked like a model out of *Esquire* and carried a saddle tan, saddle stitched brief case. He came just before noon when Bunny was about to go up toward the office. Jean took him around to introduce him.

"This is Bunny," she said, back at the casting box where he was. "Bunny's my pal."

Bunny hadn't washed his hands yet and began furtively wiping them on his trousers, but Bob seemed ready and willing to let the handshake go. He simply stared back at all the machinery, avoiding contact with everything.

They were on their way out for a quick barbecue, Jean explained hastily. Didn't Bunny want to come?

But Bunny wasn't *that* dumb. While Jean went for her coat, Bob stood jangling coins in his pocket as though someone were obviously holding him up. His polished, thick-soled shoes looked out of place on the grimy concrete floor.

He would take his printer's ink in the newspaper, delivered, it seemed.

When they left, Henshaw walked over to the lintotype machine where Ed was.

"Well," he said. "What about that?"

Ed wore a dark green eye shade that blotted out all but a grimly smiling mouth. He shook his head and said nothing.

Henshaw stared briefly into space, then grinned. "We can't even show him the type lice, can we?" he said.

Without Jean, nobody waved or smiled at Bunny on the way to Luke's. Luke gave him a glance of recognition and nothing more. Without Jean he was only a dollar bill for the cash register. He read over the sign that said "Knives, forks, and spoons are not medicine. Please don't take them after meals." He scrutinized a mounted fish on the wall, read over the names of the juke box tunes, and went on back to work early.

In a few days Ed brought them the low-down on Bob Carter. He was starting out at the top, in a small insurance company controlled by his father. Jean had met him at the University where he had been a Big Man. But according to Ed, he was only stringing Jean along and had a girl in every town. Even though Jean was out, Ed lowered his voice when he told them. It was just between the three of them. That was understood.

"I'm not surprised," Henshaw said. "Pretty-boys like that can't settle down. It's not their fault, in a way. . . ."

"I feel sorry for her, though," Ed said. "She's got it bad."

Bunny said nothing, although they included him. My boy has some true friends, Mrs. Drake always said when anyone mentioned Ed or Henshaw. Bunny may not be as bright as some, but those men at the printing office think the world and all of my boy. . . .

"Well." Henshaw shrugged. "You know the old saying. 'Beware a white man with a brief case and a nigger with a guitar!'"

But it wasn't long before Jean came in one morning with a ring on her left hand, so Ed must have been mistaken after all. Jean

didn't say anything about the ring but they all noticed. They couldn't help it. As Henshaw said, it nearly put out their eyes.

Bunny tried not to believe it, any of it. Long ago he had learned not to look into the future. The present seemed better that way. And since Jean made no mention of marriage, he chose to ignore the possibility altogether. Besides, things kept happening. Like the time Bob dropped in to find Jean out on a story. He could hardly believe she wasn't there at his convenience.

"How soon do you expect her?" he wanted to know.

What could they tell him? She was covering an all-day farm affair and could be gone for hours. They said they thought she would be back right away, if only to check in and out, but of course they weren't sure.

Bob left at once—taking his irritation with him, Henshaw said.

"But what did he say?" Jean wanted to know when she got in, in half an hour. "Was he coming back later?"

What he had said, with pointed sarcasm, was, "I should have an appointment." And he didn't come back at all.

But the main thing that kept Bunny's hope alive was a simple fact. No matter whom else Jean loved, she was still in love with the *Chronicle*. That Bunny knew.

"You've got a real editor down there now, Bunny," people would say when he went out to deliver printing jobs. "You fellows better hang on to that girl down there."

In his angular, irregular gait Bunny would hurry all the way back to the shop to tell Jean. Except for society news which a lady wrote at home, sports which Henshaw took care of, and the few obituaries that Ed could do, Jean wrote the whole paper. She had a key to the shop and was always going back until ten, eleven o'clock at night. That was when she wrote the editorials. Bill Griffin had clipped most of his, but Jean took great pride in writing her own.

The first time a big daily picked one up, Henshaw was the one who found it. Henshaw was a sports fan, and he looked through all the papers first thing every morning. He had the *Post-Herald* all spread out on the stone as usual, when suddenly he gave a kind of whoop.

"Oh, boy," he said. "Hey, ho!"

"What's the matter?" Ed called from the back. "Yankees lose?"

"Come look," he said. "Hey, Jean. Bunny!"

He was pointing with a stained finger to a column headed "State Editors Are Saying." There, along with the rest, was an editorial titled "Keep Perry County Green," and beneath it in eight-point italic type, THE FAIRVIEW CHRONICLE.

"Now that's really something," Ed said, just standing and looking.

Bunny's lip was working madly. "Ain't it?" he said. It was all he could do to stand still. "Ain't it?"

Then he looked at Jean. She was smiling, but her eyes were filled with tears. Suddenly, without a word, she turned and walked fast back to the office. Henshaw cut out the whole column and tacked it to the office door. After that the *News*, the *Advertiser*, and the *Press-Register* picked up Jean's editorials often. After about six, Henshaw stopped tacking them to the office door.

One Wednesday morning in May, press day, Jean came in with a large magnolia. "It should be the first of the season, so I will eek out a silly paragraph," she said. "There's just not any news."

But just as Henshaw was about to lock up the forms early, the phone rang. In a minute Jean came to the office door with a changed, shocked face.

"There's been a murder," she said. "A waitress out where we go for barbecues shot a man called Shine."

"Shine," said Ed, frowning beneath his eye shade. "There's not but one Shine. I know him."

"I know the waitress too," Jean said, reaching for pencil and copy paper. "I'm going out."

Almost at once the phone began to ring and kept on ringing. Violence was real news in Fairview and everyone wanted to tip off the paper.

Jean didn't get back until they were about to wonder. When she did, her face had a peculiar naked look and her eyes were glassy.

She handed Ed several pages.

"That's the facts," she said apologetically. "But that's not all. I want to write that interview with the waitress down in the jail. Can you stand it?"

It meant midnight or later and another long wait, but no one cared. News was their business. If Jean could get it they could damn well print it, Henshaw said, when she went back to the office.

Ed shook a cigarette out on the stone. "Let's go home and come back later," he suggested. "That way she won't feel like we're waiting so hard."

On the way out, Bunny went in to see if there was anything she wanted. Before she could answer, there, framed in the doorway, stood Bob Carter.

"Oh, Bob," Jean said. Her face lit up the way it always did when she saw him, but then the light seemed to waver. "Did you hear about the murder?"

"About ten times," he said indulgently. "So come one. Let's go."

This time, it seemed, he was there by appointment.

"But I can't go," Jean said, pointing helplessly to all the scattered pages.

Bunny eased out and the door was closed behind him. Water was running noisily in the back, so Henshaw would be washing his hands. Ed was slowly and carefully rolling down his sleeves.

"Bobby-boy might change our plans," he said.

By unspoken agreement, they waited to see. Jean's voice, though suppressed, could be heard explaining, then pleading, but Bob's rose steadily in anger. In the silence that followed, the door opened abruptly and Bob came out alone. Without looking up, he walked straight to the front door and out.

Not speaking, not even looking at one another except in covert, unacknowledged glances, Ed, Henshaw, and Bunny waited uncertainly around the stone. When Jean did not appear they left quietly, speaking in whispers, out of respect to all conflicts behind all doors—but for the grace of the moment, their own.

All during supper Mrs. Drake berated Bunny for getting so excited over things. The murder had nothing to do with him, thank the Lord, so why didn't he calm down and eat? He would just have to practice some self control. What did he want to go running back down there for, anyway?

"I have to run the cylinder press, Mama," he said, which was true, but only part of the truth. He wanted to go by Luke's and take Jean a sandwich. Bacon and tomato, toasted, was what she liked, he knew.

Luke's was crowded for a change. The high school crowd was there en masse, so Bunny waited impatiently on a counter stool. They would take two forevers tonight, he was thinking when, suddenly looking up, he jumped as though someone had touched him.

Not three feet away, Bob Carter was standing in front of the cash register, ready to pay his check. To Bunny's perspiring relief, Bob had not seen or did not choose to recognize him. Pivoting his stool in the opposite direction, he averted his face.

Bob asked if he might use the phone long distance and, when the cashier brought back permission from Luke, came behind the counter and put in a call to the nearest town. The phone was almost at Bunny's elbow. He could not help overhearing from beginning to end.

"Long time no see," Bob said, without preamble, to the girl on the other end of the line. His voice was intimate, confidant. "What are you doing tonight around eight?"

Bunny never used bad words. They were for grown men not boys, and in spite of his age he was, he knew, less man than boy. He had heard people say so, in compassionate whispers. Never grew up, they would say, more like a child. But hurrying back to the shop with his sandwich and milk shake, he kept saying over and over, son of a bitch, that son of a bitch. He didn't even know he was

saying it out loud until suddenly he heard his own voice. Talking to yourself again, his mother would say.

Jean's typewriter was noisily busy. When she looked up, it took a minute to change the focus of her attention.

"Why, Bunny," she said, comprehending by degrees. "What a nice thing for you to do! I was hungry and didn't know it."

He sat on the edge of a chair while she opened it all up, then got up to go.

"Don't go," Jean said. "I need company. You didn't see Bob's car around, did you? I thought he might wait."

Bunny coughed, cleared his throat, uncrossed his bony, khaki-clad knees. "No," he said. "I didn't see his car."

With Bunny, the usual amenities did not exist. Forced conversation confused him. Like a pet, he was content with the mere presence of another, at ease when allowed to share whatever true mood prevailed. Jean seemed to know. Except for an occasional question or remark, she ate in silence. Music drifted in anonymously. From the street came youthful, high-pitched laughter. Outside the window people went by as footsteps or voices. With the last bite, Jean slowly wadded up wrappings and napkins and stuffed them into the empty carton.

"Thanks, Bunny," she said. "Thank you for . . ." Her voice broke and suddenly, without warning, she leaned on her typewriter and sobbed.

Suffused with a warmth that seemed somehow shameful, Bunny had no idea what to do or say. Stumbling awkwardly out, he was glad no one was there to see his burning, tell-tale face. Something had stirred within him for the first time, he knew, something elemental. What it was he could not have said, for it had nothing to do with words.

They went to press at nine o'clock and finished up at midnight. Jean stayed to the bitter end, when Henshaw took them home in his car. Riding down deserted streets, with the town sleeping peacefully around them, they were somehow proud of the lateness of the hour and their own exhaustion. They were 'newspaper people,' trustees of the news—good, bad, run of the mill—members, however obscure, of a great and responsible fraternity. Bunny, the last one out, recalled the meaning if not the words of a typed quotation that Jean kept thumb-tacked above her desk: "The song of the press has hushed the voice of tyrants; it has shamed the clamor of mobs; and some day it will drown the dirge of cannons."

The next morning was a red-letter Morning After. Still unable to turn their attention from the night just past, they were like people walking down the street looking back. For the first time Jean was late, and since there was nothing to do that could not wait, Ed, Henshaw and Bunny lounged idly around the stone. Even the

shafts of sunlight falling quietly through the back windows seemed oddly reminiscent, having no importance except as rays from a distant, burning sun.

"That interview with the waitress was something," Ed said. "She almost had me crying when I set it. That was a great human interest story."

The whole town agreed with all-knowing, all-embracing small town vigor. All day people kept dropping in to compliment Jean and the *Chronicle*.

"It took a murder and Jean Day to put Fairview on the map," someone said. The story, with numerous local names and quotes, was in all the papers.

"If I did steal a pig, I want my name in the paper," someone quipped.

Ed, Henshaw, and Bunny were like members of a winning team, while Jean was carried about on the shoulders of the town, a strangely untouched heroine who, in the midst of victory, seemed stunned with defeat. She smiled, but her smiles were artificial. Her thank-you's acknowledged a hollow success. For the rest of the week she seemed in a daze, and Monday morning she wasn't wearing the ring. It was conspicuous by its absence, Henshaw said. Both he and Ed were relieved.

"She'll get over it," they said. "And thank her lucky stars someday."

But the day of thanksgiving did not come. Instead of recovering, Jean was sadder than ever, Bunny thought. At lunch she talked little and ate less. Her brown eyes no longer sparkled, as if the light inside them had gone out. She became vaguely uncertain, as from illness, so that Bunny's heart ached to look at her. Longing to comfort her, he recognized at last the inchoate yearning that had plagued him for weeks. He wanted to touch her as well.

The idea itself made him tremble. At the thought, his hands would shake so that he must hide them, get them out of sight. His voice, when he spoke, was more tremulous than ever. His upper lip was in constant motion.

"What on earth is wrong with you, Bunny?" Mrs. Drake demanded in growing irritation.

Gone, too, were the happy days, the jokes and laughter. Only Ed and Henshaw were the same, and they appeared helpless before a broken romance and a woman's heavy heart. Getting out the *Chronicle* was no longer a labor of love but a job.

Try as he might to purge himself, Bunny became more and more possessed. He had no words for his mute adoration, nor any name for his puissant desire. He only knew they were with him day and night. In his bed in the back room, he slept and waked with the never-felt feel of Jean's hair, the scent of her skin, the imagined, lifegiving touch of her hand. Never once, even by accident, had

she touched him. Further than this his wildest daydream would not grow, for it was here that a long-buried memory rose up to warn him. Years ago in childhood he had liked another little girl. He sat behind her in school, hung around her at recess, gave her pencils and candy. She had tolerated him kindly enough until he tried to kiss her in a deserted hall. The instant she had recognized his intent her eyes flew wide with terror. Shrinking back in revulsion, her mouth formed a small, round cavern of horror. She would have screamed, he knew, if he had not backed away. The next day she changed her seat and never even spoke to him again.

At last in the heat of summer, Mrs. Drake was threatening Bunny with a trip to the doctor, when the news came without warning that Bob Carter had married. His bride was the daughter of a Wiregrass cattleman—rich as Croesus, it was said; but her picture, carried in several papers, was not in bridal satin. It had been a Mississippi elopement, the gossip revealed.

"Well," Ed said, looking down at the three-column spread in the bride's hometown paper. "This will kill or cure Jean."

It did indeed seem more than she could bear. She stayed in the office most of the day she found out, but her typewriter was eloquently silent. There were frank tears in her eyes more than once. At lunch she ordered black coffee.

"You better eat," Bunny encouraged. "You'll get so you won't even cast a shadow."

"Don't worry, Bunny," she said, and her voice was braced with brave new resolve. "I'll feel better soon. Tonight I'm going to start a series of stories on a hospital. That's something the whole country needs—and could have."

Tonight, Bunny thought, as though an alarm had gone off in his brain. *Tonight* she will be at the office alone.

He hardly knew what he did for the rest of the day. Long ago, in subliminal secret, beneath and beyond his will or even knowledge, the fact that he would declare himself somehow, someday, had been accepted. Confronted now with undeniable opportunity, it was all he could do to keep up a front of apparent normality. He had already melted lead and cast plates, but forgot all about the printing jobs he was supposed to deliver.

"What's the matter with you, boy?" Henshaw asked, when the default came to light. "You better get on the ball."

It was one of the few reprimands Bunny ever needed. He had had hundreds of corrections, patient and impatient; explanations kind and exasperated. But always a final commendation: Bunny does the very best he can.

After making the deliveries he was late getting home, where he was faced by his mother, a living obstacle in housedress and apron.

Why don't you have time for supper, *what* have you got to do at the shop, *what* do you want to take a bath now for, she had to

know. When she seemed mollified at last, he flew to get dressed. He longed to put on a nice pair of pants but knew he would never get away with that, so he dressed in clean work clothes and hoped Mrs. Drake would cut short her lecture on dirtying up so much for her to wash. Combing his hair with scented oil, he gave careful attention to the cowlick on top. But he never really looked at his face in the mirror. Not once did he meet the sad eyes fringed with pale, rabbitish lashes. Trembling inside and out, he turned off the old fashioned light bulb that hung from the ceiling, and hurried from his room.

Mrs. Drake did not mention the clothes, though she saw them he knew. She sat with her Bible in hand, peering keenly over her glasses. She looked at him for what seemed a very long time.

"Son," she said at last. "I'm your mother and I know you through and through. You're a good boy. Everybody speaks well of you. Now don't go do something foolish and have to regret it."

He almost ran from the room, from his mother's knowing eyes and prophetic words. But once out of the house the darkness was reassuring. In the impersonal night he might have been any other man on his way to see a girl. Recklessly he left all warnings behind.

He walked very fast until he neared the main street, the lights, and the people. On the downtown corner a service station was open, and a man he knew sat tilted back in a chair beside the door.

"Evening, Bunny," the man said as usual.

Bunny spoke but hurried on.

Passing the power company across the street, he began to walk more slowly. His heart raced. From time to time he shivered as from cold. At the first likely window he paused, pretending interest, but it happened to be a jewelry store. What he saw was a display of wedding rings centered with a doll dressed up as June bride. He moved quickly on.

The concentrated lights in front of the Bonita seemed to expose him inside and out so that he would have rushed by—except that the *Chronicle* was only two doors down. He forced himself to stop, to read over every single movie for the month of July. A girl in the ticket window watched him with an expression he had seen on hundreds of faces all his life.

"What d'you know, Bunny?" she asked kindly, when their eyes chanced to meet.

So he had to move on. In front of the *Chronicle* he paused once more. His palms were drenched with perspiration and his heart beat wildly in a throat so dry it ached.

In the office a light was on but the shade was drawn. *Jean would be at the typewriter, a crook-necked light aimed at the page on which she worked. When he went in she would look up and smile. And then . . . Why couldn't he face it? Her mouth would form a small, round cavern of horror. . . .*

Looking nervously left and right he started off down the street in the desperate uncertainty of a runaway colt. Not many people were out at this hour. In Fairview they roll up the sidewalks at eight o'clock, people said. But cars kept going by, so he turned down the corner to the post office. It was perfectly natural for him to go there. He went twice at least, every day of his life.

Since the whole block was clear he did not go in. Alone and unseen he filled his lungs as one might satisfy thirst, then exhaled as though breathing out far more than air. At last, like a stranger, he lifted his eyes to the long-familiar scene. Down to his right the beauty shop, dentist's office and bank were all dark; but across the court square one drug store was open, an oasis of light. Like a wierdly lost shadow, he moved off in that direction.

Entering the drug store he looked at no one, but went straight to the magazine rack and gave his attention to the lowest shelf. Methodically he selected five comic books—two western, two horror, and one cartoon.

"What's the good word, Bunny?" said the girl who took his change.

"I don't know it," he replied.

Outside he tucked his purchase beneath one arm and turned his face toward home. A sudden breeze lifted up a bang of carefully combed hair and dropped it carelessly down on his forehead. With hurried strides he put the heart of town behind him, then moved more slowly down the darkening street. His footsteps on the sidewalk made no sound in the night.

C. M. Near

Triolet: Rose

You, who are so lovely and called Rose,
Have lain your hands upon our shoulders.
It does not matter that another chose
You, who are so lovely and called Rose,
Or since, Beloved, we can never lose
The greatness of our love we seem like boulders.
You, who are so lovely and called Rose,
Have lain your hands upon our shoulders.

CLIFFORD M. NEAR lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This is his first work to be published in several years.

Richard Kelly

Poised In Unread Rooms

Poised in unread rooms alone she wore
the heavy shadows of accustomed moons
learning to pose for her picture of the world,
and jewels like men at her marvellous wrist
lie turned and do honor in this light.
Be patient if the April rain attract
her face against the window glass where
first she saw her apple-eyed boys
steal through her trees and fasten their names:
they glisten still in the moon and rain.
Learn her season is falling with children
into dark corners around her mouth
and learn her rain. Deploy the smile
between the darkest edge of pain. Enjoy
this loss of light awhile and know
your subtle hand is after all too bold,
that all your scope she here exceeds and told.

From Woodside, New York, RICHARD KELLY is a student at CCNY. He has published in *Prairie Schooner*, *Olivant*, *New Orleans Poetry Journal*, and *Braithwaite Anthology*. He is the Editor of *The Half Moon*.

In Review

Li Sao, by Ch'u Yuan. Translated by Jerah Johnson. Miami: Olivant Press, 1959. \$4.00. The reviewer is Associate Professor of Chinese at the University of Michigan.

Jerah Johnson has given us an English translation of the three hundred seventy-three line Chinese poem, *Li Sao*, by Ch'u Yuan. The main body of the poem is preceded by a preface and an introduction. In his preface, the translator attempts to justify this additional new rendition. (The latest English translation, which escaped his attention, is the one by David Hawkes of Oxford University.) The introduction is devoted to the background of *Li Sao* without which readers, Chinese or English, would find themselves at a loss in plunging into the poem proper. The poem is rendered in prose. The stanza form is used to maintain the visual effectiveness of Chinese poetry. Much annotation is given to preserve the original compactness and conciseness. The visual effect of the Chinese version has not been lost, as the translator has set the work into four-line stanzas. The style of the English prose is simple and direct. The pregnancy of the Chinese poem is well preserved—a commendable attainment. The richness of the original's allusions, the beauty of its senses, the vastness of its environment, and its endless search for a solution are all apparent. In many places the translation succeeds admirably.

Understatements and overstatements are to be expected in any translation. No reviewer has the right to say if too much interpretation, or not enough, has been given. Any translation, however, involves two aspects: semantic and linguistic. Semantically, in any two languages, words do not have a one-to-one relationship, for languages classify experiences differently. There are times when two different experiences are expressed by two different linguistic forms with mutually exclusive lexical meanings (A is not B) in one language,

whereas in another language the similar meanings can be expressed by one linguistic form with either or both meanings (A or B; A and B). An example is the two different forms in Chinese which mean *cry* in English. In literary Chinese, there are two expressions: one is crying perceived through sight (stanza 20, line 2 in the original and line 1 in the translation); the other is "soft" crying perceived through hearing (stanza 45, line 1). In English, *cry* can be visual; it can be soft or loud vocally; it can have all three meanings. When *cry* is used for the first meaning in Chinese, the other meanings must not be included in the interpretation. Misinterpretation can lead to misunderstanding of cultural habits. This illustrates one of the semantic problems any translator must face.

Diachronically, within the same language two different linguistic forms may have general semantic similarity but different referents. And to use a modern form with a modern meaning for an old form with an old meaning within the same general semantic area can cause confusion. For example, "province" or *sheng* is a marker of geographical divisions in modern China; *chou* is a marker of geographical divisions in China of the 4th century B. C. These geographical divisions are not the same. *Sheng* and *chou* share a general semantic function as geographical markers but are not the same specifically. Therefore, to render *chou* as "provinces" with its modern implications (stanza 66, line 1) might cause misunderstanding. Freedom of word-choice, however, is the privilege of every translator.

Perhaps it can also be said that, within limits, people dealing with bilingual (and therefore bicultural) matters do not have such freedom. The three occurrences of *God* and one occurrence of *Paradise* in the introduction with their possible Christian implication are not advisable. There was neither *God* nor *Paradise* in the Chinese culture before

Christian exposure. *God and Paradise* can bring into the mind of the reader a cultural aspect that did not exist at the time of the poet. And any possible misunderstanding of this nature can be unfortunate.

The translator should respond properly to the linguistic features of the original. But there are a few inaccuracies in this translation, a few failures in response to linguistic data. The first example is in stanza 57. The entire stanza and the first three lines of the next stanza concern the girl. They depict her vanity, a quality in her that caused the poet to terminate his meeting with her. In the English version, the translator has assigned the action of the girl in the last two lines of stanza 57 to a different person, the poet himself. The second example is in stanza 67. Chinese of the 4th century B. C. had one form—singular and plural—for the first person pronoun. Rendered into English, it must be either singular or plural. Here, the translator has selected the singular form *me*. But context shows that the reference is at least dual—indicating the poet and Ling Fen, his sympathetic fortune-teller. The reference could also be plural—indicating the poet, Ling Fen, and the world in general. In either case, perhaps the choice of the form *us* would be better.

In the translator's opinion, "the loss of the rhyme in the process of translation into prose is unimportant because the ancient Ch'u dialect in which the *Li Sao* was composed is no longer spoken and phonetic reconstructions of it are, at best, inexact." The reviewer respects his decision to give a prose translation but questions his reasoning in justification. The poet must have a reason for selecting the poetic form rather than the prose. And the loss of poetic features of the original for whatever reason is indeed a loss and not an unimportant one in this instance. Undoubtedly the translator's ability to maintain the visual form of the original is an achievement. Visual form, however, constitutes only part of the total experience intended by the poet.

Translation at best is thrice removed from reality. The synchronic and diachronic cross-currents of the semantic and linguistic aspects within the same language and between languages are constantly at odds. A translation is satisfactorily done when more than the general facts are bared. The full flavor of the original is always partly lost. As to how a poem is to be enjoyed, each person is entitled to his own opinion. Here as a case in point, it is possible that the reviewer feels the translator has conveyed with only partial success the Chinese flavor, while the translator may feel the reviewer has failed to react fully to the English version.

Jerah Johnson aims at thoroughness and accuracy, both of which can be seen in the preface, the introduction, the translation, and the annotation. More research in native materials concerning Ch'u Yuan could have helped him arrive at other possible ways of dating the span of Ch'u Yuan's life, such as 340 B. C.-287 B. C. instead of 338 B. C.-288 B. C., and capture more of the oral color of Chinese poetry. Willingness to deal with phonetic reconstructions and interest in possible confusions of written Chinese words throughout history would have permitted him to consider different interpretations of the last line of *Li Sao*: whether the poet meant to leave the world and join P'eng Hsien by committing suicide or to leave the kingdom of Ch'u—his home—by following the same advice of two different fortune-tellers, P'eng and Hsien. There is semantic similarity between the two themes. The factual referent can be different. In his translation, Jerah Johnson has executed a difficult and ambitious piece of work.

Yao Shen

Irony in the Drama, Robert B. Sharpe. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959. \$5.00. The reviewer is Head of the Department of Speech and Drama of the University of Georgia.

Professor Robert Boies Sharpe believes that all artistic appreciation, even

art itself, is ironic because art is "intended not to deceive but to be ironically perceived." The point that is consistently stressed throughout the book is the importance of the actor's impersonation and the relation of this ironic impersonation—the actor's playing of a role. The author emphasizes the fact that the actor's impersonation is inherently ironic. There are levels of impersonation, of course, which vary from the so-called "straight" role to those roles that call for various pretenses. The irony of the actor's impersonation is further complicated when we have a "play within a play" or when the character assumes a disguise or a number of disguises, figuratively or literally.

This essay deals with verbal irony, irony of fate, dramatic irony and extensively with ironic shock. Shock is discussed in great detail because the author believes that shock is basic to catharsis in both comedy and tragedy. Surely an understanding of irony and its importance can be helpful to the playwright, the director, and the actor. One might accept the statement that drama is "an ironic imitation of life"; however, one might question the overwhelming importance Professor Sharpe gives irony in the application of his theory to specific plays.

Irony, the perception of incongruity and/or paradox, is both an intellectual and emotional experience in the theatre. The unresolved contradictions of life and art seem to revolve around the "dry mock." In the theatre there are many times when the spectator has both superior knowledge and artistic detachment which are necessary for what Sedgwick has called "general dramatic irony." When the spectator knows something in the stage situation which one or more of the characters onstage do not know, then the feeling we call "dramatic irony" is produced. Ironic feeling is the perception of two or more contrasting or even contradictory levels of truth which are observed simultaneously. Catharsis, itself, is an ironic state or, as the author observes, "a state of high irony."

The fact that all great drama is essentially moral is another point mentioned briefly by the author. In spite of rape, torture, perversions, filth, lecheries, and bawdry, the great play rises above these ironic shocks through means of the actor's impersonation. The playwright's use of shock as a special ironic device to produce emotional tensions in the audience is analyzed in detail. The relation of bawdry to comedy is briefly but lucidly outlined in two sections of the book.

Active workers in the theatre—actors, directors, designers, and technicians—will certainly endorse Professor Sharpe's statement that a play is "a piece written to be presented by actors to an audience." This fact is frequently overlooked in the study of dramatic literature in college classrooms.

Not only does the author insist that "a drama is a piece for stage acting," but he rejects closet drama as a dramatic classification or literary type. Professor Sharpe states that the authors of closet dramas "imagined" them as stage productions. In brief, he asserts that if the author visualizes the drama as a stage production it cannot be classified as a closet drama. At first glance one might want to take issue with the writer but then the problem arises of trying to name a genuine closet drama. Both *Faust, Part I* and *Part II* are frequently produced in Germany. Even Thomas Hardy's *The Dynasts*—certainly very close to being a "true" closet drama—was staged by Harley Granville-Barker. If one rules out certain lyrical poems written in dialogue, such as the two masques by Robert Frost or Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*, then *Axel* by Villiers de l'Isle Adam is one of the few remaining works that might be called closet drama. And even *Axel* has been presented on the stage!

The importance of the audience knowing more than the character of characters onstage is a point that has been overlooked or ignored by many modern playwrights who frequently subordinate dramatic irony to theatrical "surprise" or suspense. The author indicates that the irony chiefly felt by contemporary American drama-

tists, particularly Eugene O'Neill, is the irony of fate; however, he insists that most contemporary plays simply do not have a central ironic mood because the modern playwright has not learned how to use irony for achieving "truly comic or truly tragic effects." He does qualify this statement by pointing out that both Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller have given some of their plays a core of ironic meaning.

Professor Sharpe shares a general opinion concerning the inability and ineptitude of many modern playwrights. He attributes their failure to write good plays not to any political or social reason or even a lack of knowledge about *how* to write a play, but to the fact that the modern dramatist simply does not know how to employ dramatic irony. This view is an oversimplification.

Although this short book—called an essay by its author—does not include a detailed treatment of many forms of irony, it will take its place alongside G. C. Sedgwick's *Of Irony, Especially in Drama* and Alan R. Thompson's *The Dry Mock: A Study of Irony in Drama*.

Leighton M. Ballew

The Blind Owl, Sadegh Hedayat. Translated by D. P. Costello. New York: Grove Press, 1957. \$3.50. The reviewer is at the University of North Carolina.

"There are sores which slowly erode the mind in solitude like a kind of canker." And so commences an exotic and fascinating tale which carefully creates a world of madness. This world is sensed through the pen of the gifted and brilliant Persian novelist, Sadegh Hedayat; born in 1903, eventually driven to suicide in 1951. The novel evokes images of a contemporary Persia, frightening and mysterious; but the reality of the existence of the mad narrator is covered with the obsessions and compulsions of his insanity. This world is not clinically described, but rather, as a painter covers a canvas with glowing colors; the world emerges with

an aura of evil flowers as a created entity. At once it is as clear and sharp and as complex a structure as an Oriental painting. The narrator, in an attempt to explain his life to his stooping shadow, writes:

"How many stories about love, copulation, marriage and death already exist, not one of which tells the truth! How sick I am of well-constructed plots and brilliant writing! I shall try to squeeze but the juices from this cluster of grapes, but whether or not the result will contain the slightest particle of truth I do not yet know. I do not know where I am at this moment . . . I feel sure of nothing in the world."

The writing is brilliant, the plot loosely constructed on the most superficial level. Beneath the erotic imagery is a compelling concern for existence in a meaningless world; and the narrator asks the questions "What is life?", "What is love?", "What is Death?", "What is Eternity?". And as did Hamlet, the narrator, after questioning his existence, after contemplating the after world, proceeds quickly and horribly along the path of his own destruction.

He writes to his shadow (the central metaphor of the novel which gives it the title, but which is seemingly reduced to ashes in this translation):

"The shadow that I cast upon the wall was much dimmer and more distant than my own body. My shadow had become more real than myself. The old odds-and-ends man, the butcher, Nanny and the bitch, my wife, were shadows of me, shadows in the midst of which I was imprisoned. I had become a screech owl, but my cries caught in my throat and I spat them out in the form of clots of blood. . . . My shadow on the wall had become exactly like an owl and, leaning forward, read intently every word I wrote. Without doubt he understood perfectly. Only he was capable of understanding. When I looked out of the corner of my eye at my shadow on the wall I felt afraid."

This novel is immensely important for various reasons; primarily, however, because it is regarded as the greatest work of Persia's most highly re-



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garded writer of fiction. It is one of the few contemporary Near Eastern novels available to us in English translation; and so it is an indication of what beautiful works are yet to come to us from that part of the world so unknown to us, so incomprehensible, and yet so urgently a concern in our own particular world.

Underlying the extreme sensationalism of the present translation is a remarkable current of Eastern mysticism and poetic beauty which renders most passages into gorgeous prose-poetry, redolent in imagery of contemporary Eastern life and culture. We, who are "so prosperous and so safe" can gain much from this despairing tale of the madness of an impoverished painter of pen cases, an ancient art no longer necessary to life in our modern world. His obsession with the elements of mysticism and poetry in love, death and eternity will open those proverbial horizons of worlds beyond our own practical and increasingly "beat" and "angry" and also decaying world. His obsession with the image of a taunting death and the image of a magnificent dying and beautiful girl, his image of love, will move and frighten.

Russell Link

Oddments, Inklings, Omens, Moments poems, Alastair Reid. Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown and Co., 1959. \$3.75. The reviewer is at the University of North Carolina.

A brief review of poems by a single poet must look for some metaphysical root from which all or most of the poems stem and, hopefully, flower. This is easiest, of course, with a poet who deals in abstract ideas, a versifier of metaphysical speculations. Mr. Reid is no such animal as this, but from the thirty-three poems which comprise this handsome slim volume it is possible to abstract a recurring philosophical concern. If to make such a reduction from artistic to discursive symbols violates the poetry, as indeed it must, then such is the criminal business of the reviewer.

Baldly stated, the philosophical "problem" embedded in Mr. Reid's poems is that of duality: the duality, often, which separates objective reality from the reality of imaginary experience; the duality of the name and the thing which is named; the duality of the lover and the beloved; of the instant and the memory; and, in the title poem as well as one called "For Her Sake," the power of the symbol over the mere sign.

Thus, among other notable achievements, one finds in "Growing, Flying, Happening":

...

The point is seeing—the grace
beyond recognition, the ways
of the bird rising, unnamed, unknown,
beyond the range of language, beyond its noun.

And in "In Such a Poise Is Love," the "poise" is

... between
shock and recognition—the clothes,
the chair,
bewildering, familiar.

It is the business of the poet to be concerned with this duality between a common-sense, taken-for-granted world and the world which is seen as always "bewildering," always wonderful; it is the former which the poet's vision seeks to penetrate in search of something more than appearance. Mr. Reid is directly concerned, as his poems testify.

The poems are generally marked by an easy, controlled diction and conversational cadence, occasionally broken by a conscious poetic line such as, "... that black-backed tatter-winged thing." Only seldom is there anything seriously amiss, as there is in the bathetic image of "a bright true tear across a dirty face." (The line is ambiguous, probably unintentionally, and certainly unfortunately.) All in all, this is a most successful collection, and one looks forward to more in the future from this young poet.

Anthony Wolff



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The Vichy Regime, Robert Aron. Translated from the French by Humphrey Hare. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1958. \$7.50. The reviewer teaches in the Department of History of Washington and Lee University.

"Do you believe that in 1940 any man of common sense could have imagined anything other than a victory of Germany? . . . France's interest quite obviously was to find a formula with Germany that would allow us to escape the consequences of our defeat." Thus Pierre Laval's eloquent defense (1945) summed up the attitude of his countrymen in 1940 and justified the establishment of the Vichy Regime. In that fatal year nationalism no longer was an ideology capable of creating enthusiasm or of giving Frenchmen a sense of purpose. To implicate that France was exhausted after six brief weeks of war, and exhausted by the very doctrines of the French Revolution and the practices derived from them, is the greatest irony of contemporary history. The legacy, beside "liberty, equality, and fraternity," was that of violence and vigor, drastic measures, and war on the enemies of the people. A less positive legacy, however, was the undying hatred of the word "revolution" from *bien pensants* circles since 1830. The one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the First Republic saw the Third in ruins and in its place the undoctinal motto "*Tra-
vail, Famille, Patrie.*"

In an uncommonly fine volume, a translation from the French edition of 1953, Robert Aron traces the rise and fall of this French interregnum—Vichy, 1940-1944. One is tempted to recall Tolstoi's theory that "men are history's slaves." The regime began and ended in disaster. Without it, France would have experienced occupation by the hated Germans (accomplished later and exploited from the start), perhaps no more harshly than the Low Countries, perhaps the other extreme of a Polandization. After liberation France would not have hesitated, though ashamed, to face the world. A healthy

and democratic normalcy would have characterized the great lady. But the key word is liberation, not victory. There was no victory in 1944, no "Miracle of the Marne," only a score of men who banked on an error, and a France not only anaemic and shocked but also sick. Vichy poisoned France, and its regime pointed to conspicuous failures. Scylla and Charybdis became opposing principles: bread and wine were more important than dignity, liberty, liberation, or death; Frenchmen were not the purveyors of liberty in face of the fait accompli of July 10, 1940. The greatest tragedy was that of an aged Marshal who pretended an independence which France no longer possessed. He forgot that history more often consists in events which men can temporarily direct but never control. Contempt for the fruits of the Revolution (the Marshal was a Royalist) did not save a nation from disasters more terrible than any other in French history. No Joan d'Arc's, only misguided men.

The story of Vichy is essentially the story of men, not ordeals of nerve and endurance, but vain, greedy, corrupt, inspired Frenchmen. Intelligence, even genius, hate, folly—Petain, Laval, Weygand, Bouthillier, Baudouin, Darlan, Marras—all in different ways protested against the republic they had served and the society of the Revolution; and each dreamed now of a different France in which national experience and solution would revitalize *la grande nation*. Nothing is so striking in these pages as the sterility of the attempted reconstruction—not the dominating power of the Nazis, but the folkloristic character of the ideas of honest and patriotic colleagues of the Marshal. And they were patriots of a different sort—men desperately trying to save personal honor (some to gain power) but hardly that of their country or their traditions. There is Laval the agitator who finished in the bosom of the Right, firm in his belief that the war was lost in 1940 and vainly attempting to reform France into a conservative tradition of fascism. "Let those who accuse

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me now," he said in 1945, "search their consciences and try to answer honestly what would have become of them but for me. . . . What good would it have been to liberate ruins and cemeteries." A persuasive argument! There was Pétain, firm in the historical application of the old radical doctrine—"no enemies on the left." What was he? A Saint or a Devil? More than this, he was a vain, truculent, patriotic, naive, dogmatic, ignorant, and tired Frenchman—but indispensable until the last, the rallying point of the Germans and

the hypocritical moralizing of the Right who lamented the passing of *l'ordre moral* of Church, King, and Aristocrat.

In so many ways, Robert Aron presents an admirable study of an intricate period. He has written a judicial, objective book about a subject that still commands and divides France, an event that hardened class lines, multiplied suspicions, and still makes common efforts for the common good exceedingly difficult.

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